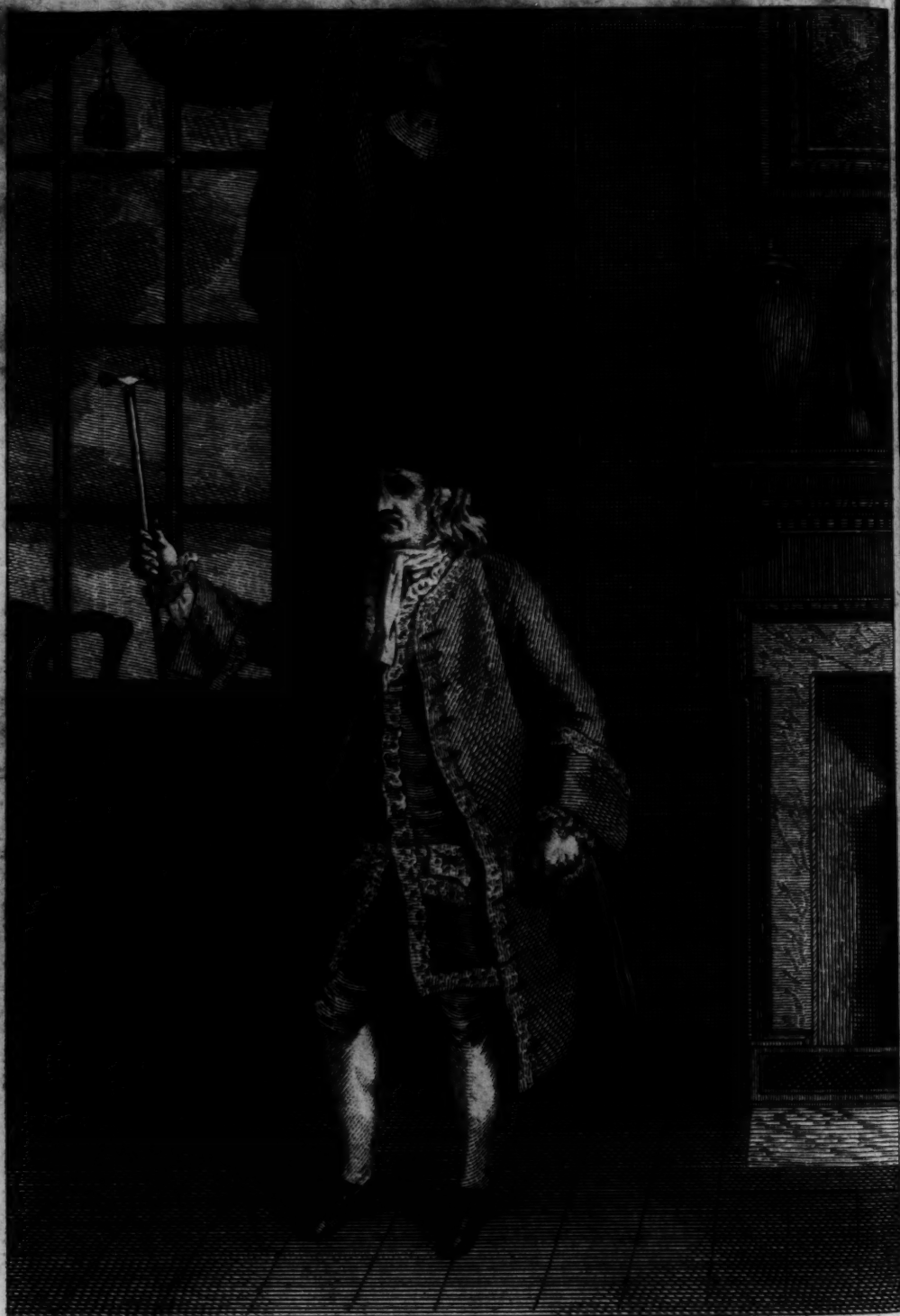


INCONSTANT.



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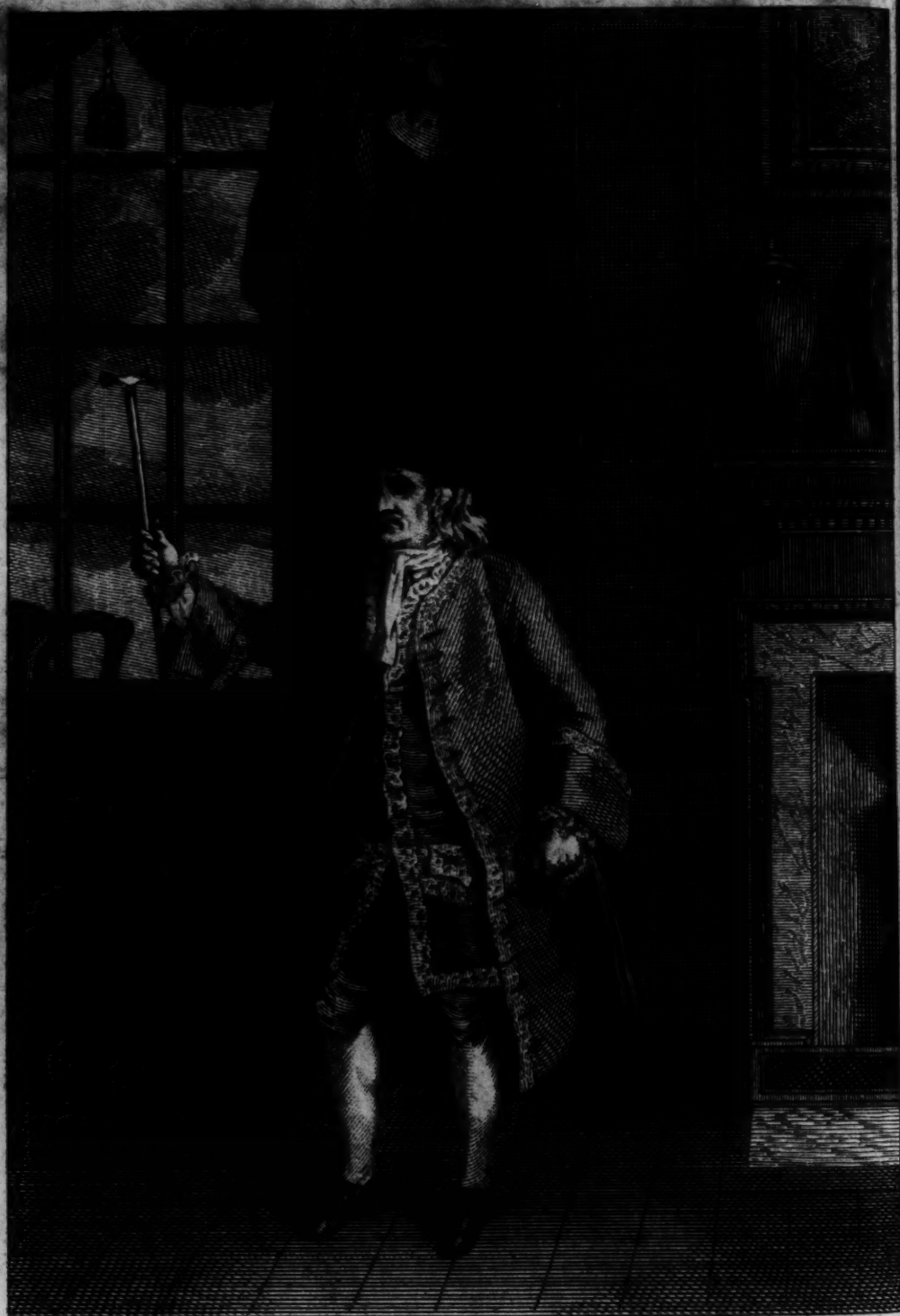
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Here, Sirrah, Rogue, Bob, Villain

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THE
INCONSTANT;
OR, THE
WAY TO WIN HIM.
A 1489. Y. 35.
COMEDY.

WRITTEN BY

MR. GEORGE FARQUHAR.

Marked with the Variations in the

MANAGER'S BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.


In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
Corpora————— Ovid Met.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. RIVINGTON and Sons, W. JOHNSTON,
S. CROWDER, W. WOODFALL, T. CASLON, T.
LOWNDES, W. NICOLL, S. BLADON, and R. BALD-
WIN.

M.DCC.LXXVII.



 The Reader is desired to observe, that the passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Lines 12 and 13, Page 8.

P R O L O G U E.

LIKE hungry guests, a fitting audience looks;
 Plays are like suppers: Poets are the cooks.
 The founders you: the table is this place:
 The carvers we: the prologue is the grace.
 Each act, a course; each scene a different dish:
 Tho' we're in Lent, I doubt you're still for flesh.
 Satire's the sauce, high-season'd, sharp and rough;
 Kind masks and beaux, I hope you're pepper-proof.
 Wit is the wine; but 'tis so scarce the true,
 Poets, like wintners, balderdash and brew.
 Your surly scenes, where rant and bloodshed join,
 Are butcher's meat, a battle's a sirloin:
 Your scenes of love, so flowing, soft and chaste,
 Are water-gruel, without salt or taste.
 Bawdy's fat venison, which tho' stale, can please:
 Your rakes love haut-gouts, like your damn'd French cheese.
 Your rarity for the fair guest to gape on,
 Is your nice Squeaker, or Italian capon;
 Or your French virgin-pullet, garnish'd round,
 And dress'd with sauce of some—Four hundred pound.
 An Opera, like an Olio, nicks the age;
 Farce is the hasty-pudding of the stage.
 For when you're treated with indifferent cheer,
 You can dispense with slender stage-coach fare.
 A pastoral's whipt cream; stage-whims, mere trash;
 And tragi-comedy, half fish and flesh.
 But comedy, that, that's the darling cheer;
 This night we hope you'll an Inconstant bear:
 Wild fowl is lik'd in play-house all the year.
 Yet since each mind betrays a diff'rent taste,
 And every dish scarce pleases ev'ry guest,
 If aught you relish, do not damn the rest.
 This favour crav'd, up let the music strike:
 You're welcome all—Now fall to, where you like.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

AT COVENT-GARDEN.

Old Mirabel, an aged Gentleman of an odd Compound, between the peevishness incident to his years, and his Fa- therly fondness towards his Son,	— — —	Mr. SHUTER.
Young Mirabel, his Son,	— — —	Mr. SMITH.
Captain Duretete, an honest good-natured fellow, that thinks himself a greater fool than he is,	— — —	Mr. WOODWARD.
Dugard, Brother to Oriana,	— — —	Mr. GARDNER.
Petit, Servant to Dugard, afterwards to his Sister,	— — —	Mr. CUSHING.

W O M E N.

Oriana, a Lady contracted to Mirabel, who would bring him to reason.	— — —	Mrs. LESSINGHAM.
Bisarre, a whimsical Lady, Friend to Oriana, admired by Duretete,	— — —	Miss MACKLIN.
Lamorce, a Woman of Contrivance	— — —	Mrs. OGLIRE.

Four Bravoes, two Gentlemen, and two Ladies.

Soldiers, Servants, and Attendants.

THE
INCONSTANT;
OR, THE
WAY TO WIN HIM.

ACT I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter Dugard, and his Man Petit in Riding Habits.

Dug. **S**IRRAH, what's a clock?

Pet. Turn'd of eleven, fir.

Dug. No more! We have rid a swinging pace from Nemours since two this morning! Petit, run to Rousseau's, and bespeak a dinner at a lewis d'or a head, to be ready by one.

Pet. How many will there be of you, fir?

Dug. Let me see, Mirabel one, Duretete two, myself three—

Pet. And I four.

Dug. How now, fir, at your old travelling familiarity! When abroad, you had some freedom for want:

6 THE INCONSTANT; OR,

of better company; but among my friends at *Paris*, pray remember your distance—Begone, fir.— [*Exit Petit.*] This fellow's wit was necessary abroad, but he's too cunning for a domestic: I must dispose of him some way else.—Who's here? Old *Mirabel*, and my sister! my dearest sister!

Enter Old Mirabel and Oriana.

Ori. My brother! welcome.

Dug. Monsieur *Mirabel*! I'm heartily glad to see you.

Old Mir. Honest Mr. *Dugard*, by the blood of the *Mirabels*, I'm your most humble servant.

Dug. Why, fir, you've cast your skin sure, you're brisk and gay, lusty health about you, no sign of age but your silver hairs.

Old Mir. Silver hairs! Then they are quick-silver hairs, fir. Whilst I have golden pockets, let my hairs be silver an they will. Adibud, fir, I can dance, and sing, and drink, and—no, I can't wench. But Mr. *Dugard*, no news of my son *Bob* in all your travels?

Dug. Your son's come home, fir.

Old Mir. Come home! *Bob* come home! By the blood of the *Mirabels*, Mr. *Dugard*, what say ye?

Ori. Mr. *Mirabel* return'd, fir.

Dug. He's certainly come, and you may see him within this hour or two.

Old Mir. Swear it, Mr. *Dugard*, presently swear it.

Dug. Sir, he came to town with me this morning, I left him at the *Bagnieurs*, being a little disorder'd after riding, and I shall see him again presently.

Old Mir. What! and he was asham'd to ask a blessing with his boots on. A nice dog! Well, and how fares the young rogue, ha?

Dug. A fine gentleman, fir. He'll be his own messenger.

Old Mir. A fine gentleman! But is the rogue like me still?

Dug. Why, yes, fir; he's very like his mother, and as like you as most modern sons are to their fathers.

Old Mir. Why, fir, don't you think that I begat him?

Dug. Why yes, fir; you married his mother, and he inherits your estate. He's very like you, upon my word.

Ori.

Ori. And pray, brother, what's become of his honest companion, *Duretete*?

Dug. Who, the captain? The very same, he went abroad; he's the only *Frenchman* I ever knew that could not change. Your son, *Mr. Mirabel*, is more obliged to nature for that fellow's composition, than for his own: for he's more happy in *Duretete's* folly than his own wit. In short, they are as inseparable as finger and thumb; but the first instance in the world, I believe, of opposition in friendship.

Old Mir. Very well; will he be home to dinner, think ye?

Dug. Sir, he has order'd me to bespeak a dinner for us at *Roussseau's*, at a lewis d'or a head.

Old Mir. A lewis d'or a head! Well said, *Bob*; by the blood of the *Mirabels*, *Bob's* improv'd. But *Mr. Dugard*, was it so civil of *Bob* to visit Monsieur *Roussseau* before his own natural father? Eh, heark'e *Oriana*, what think you, now, of a fellow that can eat and drink ye a whole lewis d'or at a sitting? he must be as strong as *Hercules*, life and spirit in abundance. Before Gad I don't wonder at these men of quality, that their own wives can't serve 'em. A lewis d'or a head! 'tis enough to stock the whole nation with bastards, 'tis faith. *Mr. Dugard*, I leave you with your sister. [Exit.

Dug. Well, sister, I need not ask you how you do, your looks resolve me; fair, tall, well shap'd; you're almost grown out of my remembrance.

Ori. Why, truly brother, I look pretty well, thank nature and my toilet; 'I have 'scap'd the jaundice, green-sickness, and the small-pox;' I eat three meals a day, am very merry when up, and sleep soundly when I'm down.

Dug. But, sister, you remember that upon my going abroad, you would chuse this old gentleman for your guardian; he's no more related to our family, than *Prefster John*, and I have no reason to think you mistrusted my management of your fortune: therefore pray be so kind as to tell me, without reservation, the true cause of making such a choice.

THE INCONSTANT; OR,

Ori. Look'e, brother, you were going rambling, and 'twas proper, lest I should go a rambling too, that somebody should take care of me. Old Monsieur *Mirabel* is an honest gentleman, was our father's friend, and has a young lady in his house, whose company I like, and who has chosen him for her guardian as well as I.

Dug. Who Mademoiselle *Bisarre*?

Ori. The same; we live merrily together, without scandal or reproach; we make much of the old gentleman between us, and he takes care of us; we eat what we like, go to bed when we please, rise when we will, 'all the week we dance and sing, and upon Sundays go 'first to church, and then to the play.'—Now, brother, besides these motives for chusing this gentleman for my guardian, perhaps I had some private reasons.

Dug. Not so private as you imagine, sister; your love to young *Mirabel's* no secret, I can assure you, but so public that all your friends are asham'd on't.

Ori. O my word then, my friends are very bashful; tho' I'm afraid, sir, that those people are not asham'd enough at their own crimes, who have so many blushes to spare for the faults of their neighbours.

Dug. Ay, but sister, the people say—

Ori. Pshaw, hang the people, they'll talk treason, and profane their Maker; must we therefore infer, that our king is a tyrant, and religion a cheat? Look'e, brother, their court of enquiry is a tavern, and their informer, claret: they think as they drink, and swallow reputations like loaches; a lady's health goes briskly round with the glass, but her honour is lost in the toast.

Dug. Ay, but sister, there is still something—

Ori. If there be something, brother, 'tis none of the people's something; marriage is my thing, and I'll stick to't.

Dug. Marriage! Young *Mirabel* marry! He'll build churches sooner. Take heed, sister, tho' your honour stood proof to his home-bred assaults; you must keep a stricter guard for the future: he has now got the foreign air, and the *Italian* softness; his wit's improved by converse, his behaviour finished by observation, and his assurances

THE WAY TO WIN HIM.

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assurances confirmed by success. Sister, I can assure you, he has made his conquests; and 'tis a plague upon your sex, to be the soonest deceiv'd by those very men that you know have been false to others.

'Ori. Then why will you tell me of his conquests? 'for I must confess there is no title to a woman's favour so engaging as the repute of a handsome dissimulation; there is something of a pride to see a fellow lie at our feet, that has triumph'd over so many; and then, I don't know, we fancy he must have something extraordinary about him to please us, and that we have something engaging about us to secure him; so we can't be quiet till we put ourselves upon the lay of being both disappointed.

'Dug.' But then, sister, he's as fickle—

Ori. For heav'n's sake, brother, tell me no more of his faults; for if you do, I shall run mad for him: say no more, sir, let me but get him into the bands of matrimony, I'll spoil his wand'ring, I warrant him, I'll do his business that way, never fear.

Dug. Well, sister, I won't pretend to understand the engagements between you and your lover; I expect when you have need of my counsel or assistance, you will let me know more of your affairs. *Mirabel* is a gentleman, and as far as my honour and interest can reach, you may command me to the furtherance of your happiness: in the mean time, sister, I have a great mind to make you a present of another humble servant: a fellow that I took up at *Lyons*, who has serv'd me honestly ever since.

Ori. Then why will you part with him?

Dug. He has gain'd so insufferably on my good humour, that he's grown too familiar; but the fellow's cunning, and may be serviceable to you in your affair with *Mirabel*. Here he comes.

Enter Petit.

Well, sir, have you been at *Rousseau's*?

Pet. Yes, sir, and who should I find there but Mr. *Mirabel* and the captain, hatching as warmly over a tub of ice, as two hen pheasants over a brood—They

would not let me bespeak any thing, for they had dined before I came.

Dug. Come, sir, you shall serve my sister, I shall still continue kind to you; and if your lady recommends your diligence upon trial, I'll use my interest to advance you; you have sense enough to expect preferment.—Here, sirrah, here's ten guineas for thee, get thyself a drugget suit and a puff-wig, and so—I dub thee gentleman usher.—Sister, I must put myself in repair, you may expect me in the evening—Wait on your lady home, *Petit*. [Exit *Dug.*

Pet. A chair, a chair, a chair!

Ori. No, no, I'll walk home, 'tis but next door.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE *a tavern, discovering young Mirabel and Duretete rising from table.*

Mir. Welcome to *Paris* once more, my dear captain, we have eat heartily, drank roundly, paid plentifully, and let it go for once. I lik'd every thing but our women, they look'd so lean and tawdry, poor creatures! 'Tis a sure sign the army is not paid.—Give me the plump *Venetian*, brisk and sanguine, that 'smiles upon me like the glowing sun, and' meets my lips like sparkling wine, her person shining as the glass, and spirit like the foaming liquor.

Dur. Ah, *Mirabel*, *Italy* I grant you; but for our women here in *France*, they are such thin brawn fall'n jades, a man may as well make a bed-fellow of a cane chair.

Mir. *France!* a light unseason'd country, nothing but feathers, foppery, and fashions; 'we're fine indeed, so are our coach-horses; men say we're courtiers, men abuse us; that we are wise and politic, *non crêdo Seigneur*: that our women have wit; parrots, mere parrots, assurance and a good memory, sets them up:—There's nothing on this side the *Alps* 'worth my humble service t'ye'—Ha *Roma la Santa!* *Italy* for my money; their customs, gardens, buildings, paintings, music, policies, wine and women! the paradise of the world:—not pester'd with a parcel of precise old gouty fellows, that would debar their children

dren every pleasure that they themselves are past the sense of: commend me to the *Italian* familiarity: here, son, there's fifty crowns, go pay your whore her week's allowance.

Dur. Ay, these are your fathers for you, that understand the necessities of young men; not like our musty dads, who because they cannot fish themselves, would muddy the water, and spoil the sport of them that can. But now you talk of the plump, what d'ye think of a *Dutch* woman?

Mir. A *Dutch* woman's too compact; nay, every thing among 'em is so; a *Dutch* man is thick, a *Dutch* woman is squab, a *Dutch* horse is round, a *Dutch* dog is short, a *Dutch* ship is broad-bottom'd; and, in short, one wou'd swear the whole product of the country were cast in the same mould with their cheeses.

Dur. Ay, but *Mirabel*, you have forgot the *English* ladies.

Mir. The women of *England* were excellent, did they not take such unsufferable pains to ruin what nature has made so incomparably well; they would be delicate creatures indeed, cou'd they but thoroughly arrive at the *French* mien, or entirely let it alone; for they only spoil a very good air of their own, by an awkward imitation of ours; their parliaments and our taylor's give laws to their three kingdoms. But come, *Duretete*, let us mind the business in hand; mistresses we must have, and must take up with the manufacture of the place, and upon a competent diligence we shall find those in *Paris* shall match the *Italians* from top to toe.

Dur. Ay, *Mirabel*, you will do well enough, but what will become of your friend; you know I am so plaguy bashful, so naturally an ass upon these occasions, that—

Mir. Pshaw, you must be bolder, man: travel three years, and bring home such a baby as bashfulness! A great lusty fellow! and a soldier! fye upon it.

Dur. Look'e, sir, I can visit, and I can ogle a little, —as thus, or thus now.—Then I can kiss, abundantly, and make a shift to—but if they chance to give me a forbidding look, as some women, you know, have a devilish cast with their eyes—or if they cry—what d'ye

mean; what d'ye take me for? Fye, fir, remember who I am, fir—A person of quality to be us'd at this rate! I-gad I'm struck as flat as a frying-pan.

Mir. Words o'course! never mind 'em: turn your about upon your heel with a jantée air; hum out the end of an old song; cut a cross caper, and at her again.

Dur. [*Imitates him.*] No hang it, 'twill never do.—Oons, what did my father mean by sticking me up in an university, or to think that I shou'd gain any thing by my head, in a nation whose genius lies all in their heels!—Well, if ever I come to have children of my own, they shall have the education of the country, they shall learn to dance before they can walk, and be taught to sing before they can speak.

Mir. Come, come, throw off that childish humour, put on assurance, there's no avoiding it; stand all hazards, thou'rt a stout lusty fellow, and hast a good estate, look bluff, hector, you have a good side-box face, a pretty impudent face; so that's pretty well.—This fellow went abroad like an ox, and is return'd like an ass. [*Aside.*]

Dur. Let me see now, how I look, [*Pulls out a pocket-glass, and looks on't.*] A side-box face, say you!—'Egad I don't like it, *Mirabel*.—Fye, fir, don't abuse your friends, I cou'd not wear such a face for the best countesses in Christendom.

Mir. Why can't you, blockhead, as well as I?

Dur. Why, thou hast impudence to set a good face upon any thing, I wou'd change half my gold for half thy brags, with all my heart. Who comes here? Odso, *Mirabel*, your father!

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where's *Bob*? dear *Bob*?

Mir. Your blessing, fir.

Old Mir. My Blessing! Damn ye, ye young rogue; why did not you come to see your father first, firrah? My dear boy, I am heartily glad to see thee, my dear child, faith—Capt. *Duretete*, by the blood of the *Mirabels*, I'm your's; well, my lads, ye look bravely faith.—*Bob*, hast got any money left?

Mir. Not a farthing, fir.

Old

Old Mir. Why, then I won't gi' thee a soufe.

Mir. I did but jest, here's ten pistoles.

Old Mir. Why, then here's ten more; I love to be charitable to those that don't want it:—Well, and how d'ye like *Italy*, my boys?

Mir. O the garden of the world, fir; *Rome, Naples, Venice, Milan*, and a thousand others—all fine.

Old Mir. Ay, say you so! And they say, that *Chiari* is very fine too.

Dur. Indifferent, fir, very indifferent; a very scurvy air, the most unwholesome to a *French* constitution in the world.

Mir. Pshaw, nothing on't; these rascally *Gazetteers* have misinform'd you.

Old Mir. Misinform'd me! Oons, fir, were not we beaten there?

Mir. Beaten, fir! the *French* beaten!

Old Mir. Why, how was it, pray sweet fir?

Mir. Sir, the captain will tell you.

Dur. No, fir, your son will tell you.

Mir. The captain was in the action, fir.

Dur. Your son saw more than I, fir, for he was a looker on.

Old Mir. Confound you both for a brace of cowards: here are no *Germans* to over-hear you; why don't ye tell me how it was?

Mir. Why, then you must know, that we march'd up a body of the finest, bravest, well-dress'd fellows in the universe; our commanders at the head of us, all lace and feather, like so many beaux at a ball—I dont believe there was a man of 'em but cou'd dance a *Charmer morbleau*.

Old Mir. Dance! very well, pretty fellows, faith!

Mir. We caper'd up to their very trenches, and there saw peeping over a parcel of scare crow, olive-colour'd gunpowder fellows, as ugly as the devil.

Dur. I-gad, I shall never forget the looks of 'em; while I have breath to fetch.

Mir. They were so civil, indeed, as to welcome us with their cannon; but for the rest, we found 'em such unman-

unmannerly, rude, unfociable dogs, that we grew tir'd of their company, and so we e'en danc'd back again.

Old Mir. And did ye all come back?

Mir. No, two or three thousand of us stay'd behind.

Old Mir. Why, *Bob*, why?

Mir. Pshaw—because they cou'd not come that night.—But come, fir, we were talking of something else; pray how does you lovely charge, the fair *Oriana*?

Old Mir. Ripe, fir, just ripe; you'll find it better engaging with her than with the *Germans*, let me tell you. And what wou'd you say, my young *Mars*, if I had a *Venus* for thee too? Come, *Bob*, your apartment is ready, and pray let your friend be my guest too, you shall command the house between ye, and I'll be as merry as the best of you.

Mir. Bravely said, father.

- Let misers bend their age with niggard cares,
- And starve themselves to pamper hungry heirs;
- Who living, stint their sons what youth may crave,
- And make 'em revel o'er a father's grave,
- The stock on which I grew does still dispense
- Its genial sap into the blooming branch;
- The fruit, he knows, from his own root is grown,
- And therefore sooths those passions once his own.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II.

SCENE, *Old Mirabel's house.*

Enter Oriana and Bifarre.

Bis. **A**ND you love this young rake, d'ye?

Ori. Yes.

Bis. In spite of all his ill usage.

Ori. I can't help it.

Bis. What's the matter wi'ye?

Ori.

Ori. Pshaw!

Bis. Um!—before that any young, lying, swearing, flattering, rakehelly fellow should play such tricks with me, I wou'd wear my teeth to the stumps with lime and chalk.—O, the devil take all your *Cassandras* and *Cleopatras* for me.—Prithee mind your airs, modes, and fashions; your stays, gowns and furbelows. Hark'ee, my dear, have you got home your furbelow'd smocks yet?

Ori. Prithee be quiet, *Bisarre*; you know I can be as mad as you when this *Mirabel* is out of my head.

Bis. Pshaw! wou'd he were out, or in, or some way to make you easy.—I warrant now, you'll play the fool when he comes, and say you love him; eh!

Ori. Most certainly,—I can't dissemble, *Bisarre*:—besides, 'tis past that, we're contracted.

Bis. Contracted! alack-a-day, poor thing. What you have chang'd rings, or broken an old *broad-piece* between you! Hark'e, child, han't you broke something else between ye?

Ori. No, no, I can assure you.

Bis. Then, what d'ye whine for? Whilst I kept that in my power, I wou'd make a fool of any fellow in *France*. Well, I must confess, I do love a little coquetting with all my heart! my business should be to break gold with my lover one hour, and crack my promise the next; he shou'd find me one day with a prayer-book in my hand, and with a play-book another. He shou'd have my consent to buy the wedding-ring, and the next moment wou'd I laugh in his face.

Ori. O my dear, were there no greater tye upon my heart, than there is upon my conscience, I wou'd soon throw the contract out o' doors; 'but the mischief on't is, I am so fond of being ty'd that I'm forc'd to be 'just, and the strength of my passion keeps down the inclination of my sex.' But here's the old gentleman.

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where's my wenches; where's my two little girls: Eh! have a care, look to yourselves, faith, they're a coming, the travellers are a coming. Well! which of you two will be my daughter-in-law now,

Bisarre,

Bifarre, Bifarre, what say you, mad-cap? *Mirabel* is a pure wild fellow.

Bif. I like him the worse.

Old Mir. You lie, hussy, you like him the better, indeed you do: What say you, my t'other little filbert? he!

Ori. I suppose the gentleman will chuse for himself fir.

Old Mir. Why, that's discreetly said; and so he shall.

Enter Mirabel and Duretete, they salute the ladies.

Old Mir. Hark'e, you shall marry one of these girls, firrah.

Mir. Sir, I'll marry 'em both, if you please.

Bif. [*Aside.*] He'll find that one may serve his turn.

Old Mir. Both! Why, you young dog, d'ye banter me?—Come, fir, take your choice.—*Duretete*, you shall have your choice too; but *Robin* shall chuse first. Come, fir, begin.

Mir. Well, I an't the first son that has made his father's dwelling a bawdy-house—let me see.

Old Mir. Well! which d'ye like?

Mir. Both.

Old Mir. But which will you marry?

Mir. Neither.

Old Mir. Neither—Don't make me angry now, *Bob*; pray don't make me angry.—Look'e, firrah, if I don't dance at your wedding to-morrow, I shall be very glad to cry at your grave.

Mir. That's a bull, father.

Old Mir. A bull! Why, how now, ungrateful fir, did I make thee a man, that thou shouldst make me a beast.

Mir. You pardon, fir. I only meant your expression.

Old Mir. Hark'e, *Bob*, learn better manners to your father before strangers: I won't be angry this time.—But oons, if ever you do't again, you rascal, remember what I say. [*Exit.*]

Mir. Pshaw, what does the old fellow mean by mewing me up here with a couple of green girls? Come, *Duretete*, will you go?

Ori. I hope Mr. *Mirabel*, you han't forgot.—

Mir. No, no, madam, I han't forgot, I have brought you a thousand little *Italian* curiosities; I'll assure you, madam, as far as a hundred pistoles would reach, I han't forgot the least circumstance.

Ori.

Ori. Sir, you misunderstand me.

Mir. Odsso, the relics, madam, from *Rome*. I do remember now you made a vow of chastity before my departure; a vow of chastity, or something like it; was it not, madam?

Ori. O sir, I'm answer'd at present. [Exit.

Mir. She was coming full mouth upon me with her contract—Would I might dispatch t'other.

Dur. Mirabel—that lady there, observe her, she's wond'rous pretty faith, and seems to have but few words; I like her mainly; speak to her, man, prithee speak to her.

Mir. Madam, here's a gentleman, who declares—

Dur. Madam, don't believe him, I declare nothing—What the devil do you mean, man?

Mir. He says, madam, that you are as beautiful as an angel.

Dur. He tells a damn'd lye, madam; I say no such thing: Are you mad, *Mirabel*? Why, I shall drop down with shame.

Mir. And so, madam, not doubting but your ladyship may like him as well as he does you, I think it proper to leave you together. [Going, *Duretete* holds him.

Dur. Hold, hold—Why, *Mirabel*, friend, sure you won't be so barbarous as to leave me alone. Prithee speak to her for yourself, as it were. Lord, lord, that a *Frenchman* should want impudence!

Mir. You look mighty demure, madam—She's deaf, captain.

Dur. I had much rather have her dumb.

Mir. The gravity of your air, madam, promises some extraordinary fruits from your study, which moves us with curiosity to enquire the subject of your ladyship's contemplation. Not a word!

Dur. I hope in the Lord she's speechless; if she be, she's mine this moment.—*Mirabel*, d'ye think a woman's silence can be natural?—

Bis. But the forms that logicians introduce, and which proceed from simple enumeration, are dubitable, and proceed only upon admittance—

Mir.

18 THE INCONSTANT; OR,

Mir. Hoyty toyty ! what a plague have we hear ?
Plato in petticoats.

Dur. Ay, ay, let her go on, man ; she talks in my own mother tongue.

Bis. 'Tis expos'd to invalidity from a contradictory instance, looks only upon common operations, and is infinite in its termination.

Mir. Rare pedantry.

Dur. Axioms ! axioms ! self evident principles.

Bis. Then the ideas wherewith the mind is pre-occupied.—O gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon my cogitation ; I was involv'd in a profound point of philosophy ; but I shall discuss it somewhere else, being satisfy'd that the subject is not agreeable to your sparks, that profess the vanity of the times. [Exit.

Mir. Go thy way, good wife *Bias* : Do you hear, *Duretete* ? Do'st hear this starch'd piece of austerity ?

Dur. She is mine, man ; she's mine : My own talent to a T. I'll match her in dialects, faith. I was seven years at the university, man, nurs'd up with *Barbara*, *Celarunt*, *Darii*, *Ferio*, *Baralipton*. Did you ever know, man, that 'twas metaphysics made me an ass ? It was, faith. Had she talk'd a word of singing, dancing, plays, fashions, or the like, I had found'er'd at the first step ; but as she is—*Mirabel*, wish me joy.

Mir. You don't mean marriage, I hope.

Dur. No, no, I am a man of more honour.

Mir. Bravely resolv'd, captain, now for thy credit, warm me this frozen snow-ball, 'twill be a conquest above the *Alps*.

Dur. But will you promise to be always near me ?

Mir. Upon all occasions, never fear.

Dur. Why then, you shall see me in two moments make an induction from my love to her hand, from her hand to her mouth, from her mouth to her heart, and so conclude in her bed, *Categorematicæ*. [Exit.

Mir. Now the game begins, and my fool is enter'd — But here comes one to spoil my sport ; now shall I be teas'd to death with this old fashion'd contract. I shou'd love her too, if I might do it my own way, but she'll

she'll do nothing without witnesses, forsooth. I wonder women can be so immodest.

Enter Oriana.

Well, madam, why d'ye follow me?

Ori. Well, sir, why do you shun me?

Mir. 'Tis my humour, madam, and I'm naturally sway'd by inclination.

Ori. Have you forgot our contract, sir?

Mir. All I remember of that contract is, that it was made some three years ago, and that's enough in conscience to forget the rest on't.

Ori. 'Tis sufficient, sir, to recollect the passing of it; for in that circumstance, I presume, lies the force of the obligation.

Mir. Obligations, madam, that are forc'd upon the will, are no tye upon the conscience; I was a slave to my passion when I pass'd the instrument; but the recovery of my freedom makes the contract void.

' *Ori.* Sir, you can't make that a compulsion which was your own choice; besides, sir, a subjection to your own desires has not the virtue of a forcible constraint: And you will find, sir, that to plead your passion for the killing of a man, will hardly exempt you from the justice of the punishment.

' *Mir.* And so, madam, you make the sin of murder, and the crime of a contract, the very same, because that hanging and matrimony are so much alike.'

Ori. Come, Mr *Mirabel*, these expressions I expected from the raillery of your humour, but I hope for very different sentiments from your honour and generosity.

Mir. Look'e, madam, as for my generosity, 'tis at your service, with all my heart: I'll keep you a coach and six horses, if you please, only permit me to keep my honour to myself; for I can assure you, madam, that the thing called honour is a circumstance absolutely unnecessary in a natural correspondence between male and female, and he's a mad-man that lays it out, considering its scarcity, upon any such trivial occasions. There's honour requir'd of us by our friends, and honour due to our enemies, and they return it to us again; but I never heard of a man that left but an inch of his honour

honour in a woman's keeping, that could ever get the least account on't.—'Consider, madam, you have no such thing among ye, and 'tis a main point of policy to keep no faith with reprobates—thou art a pretty little reprobate, and so get thee about thy business.'

Ori. Well, fir, ev'n all this I will allow to the gaiety of your temper; your travels have improv'd your talent of talking, but they are not of force, I hope, to impair your morals.

Mir. Morals! Why there 'tis again now—I tell thee, child, there is not the least occasion for morals in any business between you and I—Don't you know, that of all commerce in the world there is no such cozenage and deceit as in the traffic between man and woman; we study all our lives long how to put tricks upon one another—'What is your business now from the time you throw away your artificial babies, but how to get natural ones with the most advantage!'—No fowler lays abroad more nets for his game, nor a hunter for his prey, than you do to catch poor innocent men—'Why do you sit three or four hours at your toilet in a morning? only with a villainous design to make some poor fellow a fool before night. What are your languishing looks, your studied air and affectations, but so many baits and devices to delude men out of their dear liberty and freedom?'—What d'ye sigh for? What d'ye weep for? What d'ye pray for? Why, for a husband: that is, you implore Providence to assist you in the just and pious design of making the wisest of his creatures a fool, and the head of the creation a slave.

Ori. Sir, I am proud of my power, and am resolv'd to use it.

Mir. Hold, hold, madam, not so fast—As you have variety of vanities to make coxcombs of us; so we have vows, oaths, and protestations of all sorts and sizes to make fools of you. 'As you are very strange and whimsical creatures, so we are allow'd as unaccountable ways of managing you.' And this, in short, my dear creature, is our present condition. I have sworn and ly'd briskly to gain my ends of you; your ladyship has patch'd and painted violently, to gain your ends.

ends of me.—But, since we are both disappointed, let us make a drawn battle, and part clear on both sides.

Ori. With all my heart, sir; give me up my contract, and I'll never see your face again.

Mir. Indeed I won't, child.

Ori. What, sir, neither do one nor t'other?

Mir. No, you shall die a maid, unless you please to be otherwise upon my terms.

Ori. What do you intend by this, sir?

Mir. Why, to starve you into compliance; look'e, you shall never marry any man; and you had as good let me do you a kindness as a stranger.

Ori. Sir, you're a——

Mir. What am I, mistress?

Ori. A villain, sir?

Mir. I'm glad on't—I never knew an honest fellow in my life, but was a villain upon these occasions.—Ha'n't you drawn yourself now into a very pretty dilemma? Ha, ha, ha! the poor lady has made a vow of virginity, when she thought of making a vow for the contrary. Was ever poor woman so cheated into chastity?

Ori. Sir, my fortune is equal to yours, my friends as powerful, and both shall be put to the test, to do me justice.

Mir. What! you'll force me to marry you, will ye?

Ori. Sir, the law shall.

Mir. But the law can't force me to do any thing else, can it?

Ori. Pshaw, I despise thee—Monster.

Mir. Kifs and be friends then—Don't cry, child, and you shall have your sugar-plumb—Come, madam, d'ye think I could be so unreasonable as to make you fast all your life long? No, I did but jest, you shall have your liberty; here, take your contract, and give me mine.

Ori. No, I won't.

Mir. Eh! What is the girl a fool?

Ori. No, sir, you shall find me cunning enough to do myself justice; and since I must not depend upon your love, I'll be reveng'd, and force you to marry me out of spight.

Mir.

Mir. Then I'll beat thee out of spight; and make a most confounded husband.

Ori. O fir, I shall match ye: a good husband makes a good wife at any time.

Mir. I'll rattle down your china about your ears.

Ori. And I'll rattle about the city to run you in debt for more.

Mir. Your face-mending toilet shall fly out of the window.

Ori. And your face-mending perriwig shall fly after it.

Mir. I'll tear the furbelow off your clothes, and when you swoon for vexation, you sha'nt have a penny to buy a bottle of harts-horn.

Ori. And you, fir, shall have harts-horn in abundance.

Mir. I'll keep as many mistresses as I have coach-horses.

Ori. And I'll keep as many gallants as you have grooms.

Mir. I'll lie with your woman before your face.

Ori. Have a care of your valet behind your back.

Mir. But, sweet madam, there is such a thing as a divorce.

Ori. But, sweet fir, there is such a thing as alimony, so divorce on, and spare not. [Exit.

Mir. Ay, that separate maintenance is the devil—there's their refuge—o' my conscience, one wou'd take cuckoldom for a meritorious action, because the women are so handsomely rewarded for't. [Exit.

SCENE changes to a large parlour in the same house.

Enter Duretete and Petit.

Dur. And she's mighty peevish, you say?

Pet. O fir, she has a tongue as long as my leg, and talks so crabbedly, you wou'd think she always spoke *Welsh*.

Dur. That's an odd language, methinks, for her philosophy.

Pet. But sometimes she will sit you half a day without speaking a word, and talk oracles all the while by the wrinkles of her forehead, and the motions of her eyebrows.

Dur. Nay, I shall match her in philosophical ogles, faith; that's my talent: I can talk best, you must know, when I say nothing.

Pet.

Pet. But d'ye ever laugh, sir?

Dur. Laugh? Won't she endure laughing?

Pet. Why she's a critic, sir, she hates a jest, for fear it should please her; and nothing keeps her in humour but what gives her the spleen. And then for logic, and all that, you know——

Dur. Ay, ay, I'm prepar'd, I have been practising hard words, and nonsense, this hour to entertain her.

Pet. Then place yourself behind this screen, that you may have a view of her behaviour before you begin.

Dur. I long to engage her, lest I shou'd forget my lesson.

Pet. Here she comes, sir, I must fly.

[*Exit Pet. and Dur. stands peeping behind the curtain.*

Enter Bisarre and maid.

Bis. [*With a book*] Pshaw, hang books, they sour our temper, spoil our eyes, and ruin our complections.

[*Throws away the book.*

Dur. Eh! the devil such a word is there in all *Aristotle*.

Bis. Come, wench, let's be free, call in the fiddle, there's no body near us.

Enter Fidler.

Dur. Wou'd to the Lord there was not.

Bis. Here, friend, a minuet!—quicker time! ha—wou'd we had a man or two.

Dur. [*Stealing away.*] You shall have the devil sooner, my dear dancing philosopher.

Bis. Uds my life!—Here's one.

[*Runs to Dur. and hauls him back.*

Dur. Is all my learn'd preparation come to this?

Bis. Come, sir, don't be asham'd, that's my good boy—you're very welcome, we wanted such a one—Come, strike up—I know you dance well, sir, you're finely shap'd for't—Come, come, sir; quick, quick, you miss the time else.

Dur. But, madam, I come to talk with you.

Bis. Ay, ay, talk as you dance, talk as you dance, come.

Dur. But we were talking of dialectics.

Bis. Hang dialectics—Mind the time—quicker, Sirrah, [*To the fidler*] Come—and how d'ye find yourself now, sir?

Dur. In a fine breathing sweat, doctor.

Bis.

Bis. All the better, patient, all the better;—Come, fir, sing now, sing, I know you sing well; I see you have a singing face; a heavy dull sonato face.

Dur. Who, I sing?

Bis. O you're modest, fir—but come, sit down, closer, closer. Here, a bottle of wine—Come, fir, fa, la, lay; sing, fir.

Dur. But, madam, I came to talk with you.

Bis. O fir, you shall drink first. Come, fill me a bumper—here, fir, bless the king.

Dur. Wou'd I were out of his dominions—by this right, she'll make me drunk too.

Bis. O pardon me, fir, you shall do me right, fill it higher.—Now, fir, can you drink a health under your leg?

Dur. Rare philosophy that, faith.

Bis. Come, off with it to the bottom.—Now, how d'ye like me, fir?

Dur. O mighty well, madam.

Bis. You see how a woman's fancy varies, sometimes splenetic and heavy, then gay and frolicsome.—And how d'ye like the humour?

Dur. Good madam, let me sit down to answer you, for I am heartily tir'd.

Bis. Fye upon't; a young man, and tir'd! up for shame, and walk about, action becomes us—a little faster, fir.—What d'ye think now of my lady *La Pale*, and lady *Coquet*, the Duke's fair daughter? Ha! Are they not brisk lasses? Then there is black Mrs. *Bellair*, and brown Mrs. *Bellface*.

Dur. They are all strangers to me, madam.

Bis. But let me tell you, fir, that brown is not always despicable—O lard, fir, if young Mrs. *Bagatell* had kept herself single 'till this time, o'day, what a beauty there had been! And then, you know, the charming Mrs. *Monkeylove*, the fair gem of *St. Germain's*.

Dur. Upon my soul, I don't.

Bis. And then you must have heard of the *English* beau, *Splenamore*, how unlike a gentleman—

Dur. Hey—not a syllable on't, as I hope to be saved, madam.

Bis. No! Why then play me a jig. Come, sir.

Dur. By this light I cannot; faith, madam, I have sprain'd my leg.

Bis. Then sit you down, sir; and now tell me what's your business with me? What's your errand? Quick, quick, dispatch—Odsso, may be you are some gentleman's servant, that has brought me a letter, or a haunch of venison.

Dur. 'Sdeath, madam, do I look like a carrier?

Bis. O! cry you mercy, I saw you just now, I mistook you, upon my word: you are one of the travelling gentlemen—and pray, sir, how do all our impudent friends in *Italy*?

Dur. Madam, I came to wait on you with a more serious intention than your entertainment has answered.

Bis. Sir, your intention of waiting on me was the greatest affront imaginable, howe'er your expressions may turn it to a compliment: your visit, sir, was intended as a prologue to a very scurvy play, of which Mr. *Mirabel* and you so handsomely laid the plot.—*Marry!* No, no, *I'm a man of more honour.* Where's your honour? Where's your courage now? Ads my life, sir, I have a great mind to kick you.—Go, go to your fellow-rake now, rail at my sex and get drunk for vexation, and write a lampoon—But I must have you to know, sir, that my reputation is above the scandal of a libel, my virtue is sufficiently approv'd to those whose opinion is my interest: and for the rest, let them talk what they will; for when I please I'll be what I please, in spite of you and all mankind; and so my dear *man of honour*, if you be tir'd, con over this lesson, and sit there till I come to you. [Runs off.]

Dur. Tum ti tum. [Sings] Ha, ha, ha! *Ads my life, I have a great mind to kick you!*—Oons and confusion! [Starts up] Was ever man so abus'd?—Ay, *Mirabel* set me on.

Enter Petit.

Pet. Well, sir, how d'ye find yourself?

Dur. You son of a nine-ey'd whore, d'ye come to abuse me? I'll kick you with a vengeance, you dog.

[Petit runs off, and Dur. after him.]

A C T III.

S C E N E *continues.**Old Mirabel and the Young.**Old Mir.* **B**O B, come hither, *Bob.**Mir.* Your pleasure, sir?*Old Mir.* Are not you a great rogue, firrah?*Mir.* That's a little out of my comprehension, sir, for I've heard say, that I resemble my father.*Old Mir.* Your father is your very humble slave—I tell thee what, child, thou art a very pretty fellow, and I love thee heartily; and a very great villain, and I hate thee mortally.*Mir.* Villain, sir! then I must be a very impudent one, for I can't recollect any passage of my life that I'm ashamed of,*Old Mir.* Come hither, my dear friend; do'st see this picture? [*Shews him a little picture.*]*Mir.* *Oriana's*? Pshaw!*Old Mir.* What, sir, won't you look upon't—*Bob*, dear *Bob*, prithee come hither now—Do'st want any money, child?*Mir.* No, sir.*Old Mir.* Why then here's some for thee; come here now—How can'st thou be so hard-hearted, an unnatural, unmannerly rascal (don't mistake me, child, I a'nt angry) as to abuse this tender, lovely, good-natur'd dear rogue?—Why, she sighs for thee, and cries for thee, pouts for thee, and snubs for thee, the poor little heart of it is like to burst—Come, my dear boy, be good-natur'd like your own father, be now—and then see here, read this—the effigies of the lovely *Oriana*, with ten thousand pounds to her portion—ten thousand pounds you dog; ten thousand pounds you rogue; how dare you refuse a lady with ten thousand pounds, you impudent rascal:*Mir.* Will you hear me speak, sir?*Old Mir.* Hear you speak, sir! If you had ten thousand tongues, you cou'd not out-talk ten thousand pounds, sir.*Mir.*

Mir. Nay, sir, if you won't hear me I'll be gone, sir! I'll take post for *Italy* this moment.

Old Mir. Ah! the fellow knows I won't part with him. Well, sir, what have you to say?

Mir. The universal reception, sir, that marriage has had in the world, is enough to fix it for a public good, and to draw every body into the common cause; but there are some constitutions, like some instruments, so peculiarly singular, that they make tolerable music by themselves, but never do well in a concert.

Old Mir. Why this is reason, I must confess, but yet it is nonsense too; for tho' you shou'd reason like an angel, if you argue yourself out of a good estate, you talk like a fool.

Mir. But, sir, if you bribe me into bondage with the riches of *Cræsus*, you leave me but a beggar for want of my liberty.

Old Mir. Was ever such a perverse fool heard? 'Sdeath, sir, why did I give you education? was it to dispute me out of my senses? Of what colour now is the head of this cane? You'll say 'tis white, and ten to one make me believe it too—I thought that young fellows studied to get money.

Mir. No, sir, I have study'd to despise it; my reading was not to make me rich, but happy, sir.

Old Mir. There he has me again now. But, sir, did not I marry to oblige you?

Mir. To oblige me, sir, in what respect pray?

Old Mir. Why, to bring you into the world, sir; wasn't that an obligation?

Mir. And because I wou'd have it still an obligation, I avoid marriage.

Old Mir. How is that, sir?

Mir. Because I wou'd not curse the hour I was born.

Old Mir. Look'e, friend, you may persuade me out of my designs, but I'll command you out of yours; and tho' you may convince my reason that you are in the right, yet there is an old attendant of sixty-three, call'd positiveness, which you nor all the wits in *Italy*

shall ever be able to shake: so, sir, you're a wit, and I'm a father; you may talk, but I'll be obey'd.

Mir. This it is to have the son a finer gentleman than the father; they first give us breeding that they don't understand, then they turn us out of doors 'cause we are wiser than themselves. But I'm a little aforehand with the old gentleman. [*Aside.*] Sir, you have been pleas'd to settle a thousand pound sterling a year upon me; in return of which, I have a very great honour for you and you family, and shall take care that your only and beloved son shall do nothing to make him hate his father, or to hang himself. So, dear sir, I'm your very humble servant. [*Runs off.*]

Old Mir. Here, firrah, rogue, *Bob*, villain!

Enter Dugard.

Dug. Ah, sir, 'tis but what he desevs.

Old Mir. 'Tis false, sir, he don't deserve it: what have you to say against my boy, sir?

Dug. I shall only repeat your own words.

Old Mir. What have you to do with my words? I have swallow'd my words already, I have eaten them up, and how can you come at 'em, sir?

Dug. Very easily, sir: 'Tis but mentioning your injur'd ward, and you will throw them up again immediately.

Old Mir. Sir, your sister was a foolish young flirt to trust any such young, deceitful, rake-helly rogue, like him.

Dug. Cry you mercy, old gentleman, I thought we shou'd have the words again.

Old Mir. And what then? 'Tis the way with young fellows to slight an old gentleman's words, you never mind 'em when you ought.—I say, that *Bob's* an honest fellow, and who dares deny it?

Enter Bizarre.

Biz. That dare I, sir:—I say, that your son is a wild, foppish, whimsical, impertinent coxcomb; and where I abu'd as this gentleman's sister is, I wou'd make it an *Italian* quarrel, and poison the whole family.

Dug. Come, sir, 'tis no time for trifling, my sister is abus'd; you are made sensible of the affront, and your honour is concern'd to see her redress'd.

Old Mir.

Old Mir. Look'e, Mr. *Dugard*, good words go farthest. I will do your sister justice, but it must be after my own rate: no body must abuse my son but myself. For altho' *Robin* be a sad dog, yet he's no body's puppy but my own.

Bis. Ay, that's my sweet-natur'd, kind old gentleman—[*Wheedling him.*] We will be good then, if you'll join with us in the plot.

Old Mir. Ah, you coaxing young baggage, what plot can you have to wheedle a fellow of sixty-three?

Bis. A plot that sixty-three is only good for, to bring other people together, fir; a *Spanish* plot 'less dangerous 'than that of eighty-eight,' and you must act the *Spaniard*, 'cause your son will least suspect you; and if he shou'd, your authority protects you from a quarrel, to which *Oriana* is unwilling to expose her brother.

Old Mir. And what part will you act in the business, madam?

Bis. Myself, fir; my friend is grown a perfect changeling: these foolish hearts of ours spoil our heads presently; the fellows no sooner turn knaves, but we turn fools: but I am still myself, and he may expect the most severe usage from me, 'cause I neither love him, nor hate him. [Exit.]

Old Mir. Well said, Mrs. Paradox; but, fir, who must open the matter to him?

Dug. Petit. fir, who is our engineer-general. And here he comes.

Enter Petit.

Pet. O fir, more discoveries; are all friends about us?

Dug. Ay, ay, speak freely.

Pet. You must know, fir.—od's my life I'm out of breath; you must know, fir—you must know—

Old Mir. What the devil must we know, fir?

Pet. That I have [*Pants and blows*] brib'd, fir, brib'd—your son's secretary of state!

Old Mir. Secretary of state!—who's that for Heav'n's sake?

Pet. His valet-de-chambre, fir? You must know, fir, that the intrigue lay folded up with his master's clothes, and when he went to dust the embroider'd suit, the se-

cret flew out of the right pocket of his coat, in a whole swarm of your crambo songs, short-footed odes, and long-legg'd Pindarics.

Old Mir. Impossible!

Pet. Ah, sir, he has lov'd her all along; there was *Oriana* in every line, but he hates marriage. Now, sir, this plot will stir up his jealousy, and we shall know by the strength of that how to proceed farther.

Come, sir, lets about it with speed,

'Tis expedition gives our king the sway;

For expedition to the *French* give way;

Swift to attack, or swift—to run away. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mirabel and Bifarre, passing carelessly by one another.

Bis. [*Aside.*] I wonder what she can see in this fellow to like him?

Mir. [*Aside.*] I wonder what my friend can see in this girl to admire her?

Bis. [*Aside.*] A wild, foppish, extravagant rake-hell.

Mir. [*Aside.*] A light, whimsical, impertinent mad-cap.

Bis. Whom do you mean, sir?

Mir. Whom do you mean, madam?

Bis. A fellow that has nothing left to re-establish him for a human creature, but a prudent resolution to hang himself.

Mir. There is a way, madam, to force me to that resolution.

Bis. I'll do't with all my heart.

Mir. Then you must marry me.

Bis. Look'e, sir, don't think your ill manners to me shall excuse your ill usage of my friend; nor by fixing a quarrel here, to divert my zeal for the absent; for I'm resolv'd, nay, I come prepar'd to make you a panegyric, that shall mortify your pride like any modern dedication.

Mir. And I, madam, like a true modern patron, shall hardly give you thanks for your trouble.

Bis. Come, sir, to let you see what little foundation you have for your dear sufficiency, I'll take you to pieces.

Mir. And what piece will you chuse?

Bis.

Bis. You heart, to be sure; 'cause I shou'd get presently rid on't; your courage I wou'd give to a *Hector*, your wit to a lewd play-maker, you honour to an attorney, your body to the physicians, and your soul to its master.

Mir. I had the oddest dream last night of the dutchess of *Burgundy*; methought the furbelows of her gown were pinn'd up so high behind, that I cou'd not see her head for her tail.

Bis. The creature don't mind me! do you think, sir, that your humourous impertinence can divert me? No, sir, I'm above any pleasure that you can give, but that of seeing you miserable. And mark me, sir, my friend, my injur'd friend, shall yet be doubly happy, and you shall be a husband as much as the rites of marriage, and the breach of 'em can make you.

[*Here Mirabel pulls out a Virgil, and reads to himself while she speaks.*]

Mir. [Reading.] *At Regina dolos, (quis fallere possit amantem?)*

Diffimulare etiam sperasti, perfide tantum [Very true.]
Posse nefas.

By your favour, friend *Virgil*, 'twas but a rascally trick of your hero to forsake poor pug so inhumanly.

Bis. I don't know what to say to him. The devil—what's *Virgil* to us, sir?

Mir. Very much, madam, the most appropos in the world—for, what shou'd I chop upon, but the very place where the perjur'd rogue of a lover and the forsaking lady are battling it tooth and nail. Come, madam, spend your spirits no longer, we'll take an easier method: I'll be *Aeneas* now, and you shall be *Dido*, and we'll rail by book. Now for you, madam *Dido*.

Nec te nofter amor, nec te data dextera quondam,

Nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido—

Ah, poor *Dido*!

[*Looking at her.*]

Bis. Rudeness, affronts, impatience! I cou'd almost start out even to manhood, and want but a weapon as long as his to fight him upon the spot. What shall I say?

32 THE INCONSTANT; OR,

Mir. Now she rants.

Quæ quibus anteferam? jam jam nec Maxima Juno.

Bis. A man! No, the woman's birth was spirited away.

Mir. Right, right, madam, the very words.

Bis. And some pernicious elf left in the cradle with human shape to palliate growing mischief.

[Both speak together, and raise their voices by degrees.

Mir. *Perfide, sed duris genuit te Cautibus horrens Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admorunt Ubra Tigres.*

Bis. Go, sir, fly to your midnight revels.—

Mir. [Excellent.] *I sequare Italiam ventis, pete regnæ per undas,*

Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia Numina possunt.

[Together again.

Bis. Converse with imps of darkness of your make, your nature starts at justice, and shivers at the touch of virtue. Now the devil take his impudence, he vexes me so, I don't know whether to cry or laugh at him.

Mir. Bravely perform'd, my dear *Libyan*; I'll write the tragedy of *Dido*, and you shall act the part: but you do nothing at all, unless you fret yourself into a fit; for here the poor lady is stifled with vapours, drops into the arms of her maids; and the cruel, barbarous, deceitful wanderer, is in the very next line call'd *Pias Æneas*.—There's authority for ye.

Sorry indeed *Æneas* stood

To see her in a pout;

But *Jove* himself, who ne'er thought good

To stay a second bout,

Commands him off with all his crew,

And leaves poor *Dy*, as I leave you. [Runs off.

Bis. Go thy ways, for a dear, mad, deceitful, agreeable fellow. O' my conscience I must excuse *Oriana*.

That lover soon his angry fair disarms,

Whose slighting pleases, and whose faults are charms.

[Exit.

Enter Petit, runs about to every door, and knocks.

Per. Mr. *Mirabel*! Sir, where are you? no where to be found?

Enter

Enter Mirabel.

Mir. What's the matter, *Petit*?

Pet. Most critically met—Ah, sir, that one who has follow'd the game so long, and brought the poor hare just under his paws, should let a mungrel cur chop in, and run away with the puss.

Mir. If your worship can get out of your allegories, be pleas'd to tell me in three words what you mean.

Pet. Plain, plain, sir. Your mistress and mine is going to be marry'd.

Mir. I believe you lye, sir.

Pet. Your humble servant, sir.

[*Going.*

Mir. Come hither, *Petit*. Marry'd, say you?

Pet. No, sir, 'tis no matter; I only thought to do you a service, but I shall take care how I confer my favours for the future.

Mir. Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons. [*Bowing low.*

Pet. 'Tis enough, sir,—I come to tell you, sir, that *Oriana* is this moment to be sacrificed; marry'd past redemption.

Mir. I understand her, she'll take a husband out of spight to me, and then out of love to me she will make him a cuckold; 'tis ordinary with women to marry one person for the sake of another, and to throw themselves into the arms of one they hate, to secure their pleasure with the man they love.' But who is the happy man?

Pet. A lord, sir.

Mir. I'm her ladyship's most humble servant; a train and a title, hey! Room for my lady's coach, a front-row in the box for her ladyship; lights, lights for her honour.—Now must I be a constant attender at my lord's levee, to work my way to my lady's couchee—a countess; I presume, sir.—

Pet. A *Spanish* count, sir, that Mr. *Dugard* knew abroad, is come to *Paris*, saw your mistress yesterday, marries her to-day, and whips her into *Spain* to-morrow.

Mir. Ay, is it so? and must I follow my cuckold over the *Pyrenees*? Had she marry'd within the precincts of a billet-doux, I would be the man to lead her to church; but as it happens, I'll forbid the banns. Where is this mighty don?

Pet. Have a care, fir, he's a rough cross-grained piece, and there's no tampering with him; wou'd you apply to Mr. *Dugard*, or the lady herself, something might be done, for it is despright to you, that the business it carry'd so hastily. Odso, fir, here he comes. I must be gone. [Exit.

Enter Old Mir. dressed in a Spanish Habit, leading Oriana.

Ori. Good my lord, a nobler choice had better suited your lordship's merit. My person, rank, and circumstance, expose me as the public theme of raillery, and subject me so to injurious usage, my lord, that I can lay no claim to any part of your regard, except your pity.

Old Mir. Breathes he vital air, that dares presume With rude behaviour to profane such excellence?

Shew me the man——

And you shall see how my sudden revenge
Shall fall upon the head of such presumption.

Is this thing one?

[Strutting up to Mirabel.

Mir. Sir?

Ori. Good my lord.

Oia Mir. If he, or any he!

Ori. Pray, my lord, the gentleman's a stranger.

Old Mir. O your pardon, fir,—but if you had—remember, fir,—the lady now is mine, her injuries are mine; therefore, fir, you understand me——Come, madam. [Leads Oriana to the door, she goes off, Mir.

runs to his father, and pulls him by the sleeve.

Mir. Ecoute, Monsieur le Count.

Old Mir. Your business, fir?

Mir. Boh!

Old Mir. Boh! What language is that, fir?

Mir. Spanish, my lord.

Old Mir. What d'ye mean?

Mir. This, fir.

[Trips up his heels.

Old Mir. A very concise quarrel, truly—I'll bully him.—*Trinidad* Seigneur, give me fair play.

[Offering to rise.

Mir. By all means, fir. [Takes away his sword.] Now Seigneur, where's that bombast look, and fustian face your countship wore just now? [Strikes him.

Old

Old Mir. The rogue quarrels well, very well, my own son right!—But hold, firrah, no more jesting; I'm your father, fir, your father.

Mir. My father! Then by this light I could find in my heart to pay thee. [*Aside.*] Is the fellow mad? Why sure, fir, I ha'n't frighted you out of your senses?

Old Mir. But you have, fir.

Mir. Then I'll beat them into you again.

[*Offers to strike him.*]

Old Mir. Why, rogue——*Bob*, dear *Bob*, don't you know me, child!

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! the fellow's downright distracted. Thou miracle of impudence! wou'dst thou make me believe that such a grave gentleman as my father wou'd go a masquerading thus? That a person of threescore and three would run about in a fool's coat to disgrace himself and family? Why, you impudent villain, do you think I will suffer such an affront to pass upon my honour'd father, my worthy father, my dear father? 'Sdeath, fir, mention my father but once again, and I'll send your soul to thy grandfather this minute!

[*Offering to stab him.*]

Old Mir. Well, well, I am not your father.

Mir. Why then, fir, you are the saucy, hectoring *Spaniard*, and I'll use you accordingly.

Old Mir. The devil take the *Spaniards*, fir, we have 'all got nothing but blows since we began to take their 'part.'

Enter Dugard, Oriana, Maid, Petit. Dugard runs to Mirabel, the rest to the Old Gentleman.

Dug. Fye, fye, *Mirabel*, murder your father!

Mir. My father! what is the whole family mad? Give me way, fir, I won't be held.

Old Mir. No? nor I neither; let me be gone, pray.

[*Offering to go.*]

Mir. My father!

Old Mir. Ay, you dog's face! I am your father, for I have bore as much for thee, as your mother ever did.

Mir. O ho! then this was a trick, it seems a design, a contrivance, a stratagem—Oh! how my bones ach!

Old Mir. Your bones firrah, why yours?

Mir.

Mir. Why, fir, han't I been beating my own flesh and blood all this while! O, madam, [*To Oriana*] I wish your ladyship joy of your new dignity. Here was a contrivance indeed.

Pet. The contrivance was well enough, fir, for they impos'd upon us all.

Mir. Well my dear *Dulcinea*, did your *Don Quixote* battle for you bravely? My father will answer for the force of my love.

Ori. Pray, fir, don't insult the misfortunes of your own creating.

Dug. My prudence will be counted cowardice, if I stand tamely now. [*Comes up between Mirabel and his sister.*] Well, fir,

Mir. Well, fir! Do you take me for one of your tenants, fir, that you put on your landlord face at me?

Dug. On what presumption, fir, dare you assume thus? [*Draws.*]

Old Mir. What's that to you, fir. [*Draws.*]

Pet. Help! help! the lady faints.

[*Oriana falls into her Maid's arms.*]

Mir. Vapours! vapours! she'll come to herself: If it be an angry fit, a dram of *assa fetida*—If jealousy, harts-horn in water—If the mother, burnt feathers—If grief, *ratifia*—If it be strait stays, or corns, there's nothing like a dram of plain brandy. [*Exit.*]

Ori. 'Hold off, give me air'—O my brother, would you preserve my life, endanger not your own; would you defend my reputation, leave it to itself; 'tis a dear vindication that's purchas'd by the sword; for tho' our champion proves victorious, yet our honour is wounded.

Old Mir. Ay, and your lover may be wounded, that's another thing. But I think you are pretty brisk again, my child.

Ori. Ay, fir, my indisposition was only a pretence to divert the quarrel; the capricious taste of your sex excuses this artifice in ours.

*For often when our chief perfections fail,
Our chief defects with foolish men prevail.*

[*Exit.*]

Pet.

Pet. Come, Mr. *Dugard*, take courage, there is a way still left to fetch him again.

Old Mir. Sir, I'll have no plot that has any relation to *Spain*.

Dug. I scorn all artifice whatsoever; my sword shall do her justice.

Pet. Pretty justice, truly! suppose you run him thro' the body; you run her thro' the heart at the same time.

Old Mir. And me thro' the head—rot your sword, sir, we'll have plots; come, *Petit*, let's hear.

Pet. What if she pretended to go into a nunnery, and so bring him about to declare himself?

Dug. That I must confess has a face.

Old Mir. A face! a face like an angel, sir, ad's my life, sir, 'tis the most beautiful plot in *Christendom*. We'll about it immediately. [Exeunt.]

‘ SCENE, *The Street*.

‘ *Duretete and Mirabel*.

‘ *Dur.* [*In a passion.*] And tho' I can't dance, nor sing, nor talk like you, yet I can fight, you know I can, sir.

‘ *Mir* I know thou can'st, man.

‘ *Dur.* 'Sdeath, sir, and I will: let me see the proudest man alive make a jest of me?

‘ *Mir* But I'll engage to make you amends.

‘ *Dur.* Danc'd to death! Baited like a bear! Ridiculous! Threaten'd to be kick'd! Confusion! sir, you set me on, and I will have satisfaction; all mankind will point at me.

‘ *Mir.* [*Aside.*] I must give this thunderbolt some passage, or 'twill break upon my own head—Look'e, *Duretete*, what do these gentlemen laugh at?

‘ *Enter two gentlemen.*

‘ *Dur.* At me, to be sure—Sir, what made you laugh at me?

‘ 1 *Gen.* You're mistaken, sir, if we were merry, we had a private reason.

‘ 2 *Gen.* Sir, we don't know you.

‘ *Dur.* Sir, I'll make you know me; mark and observe me, I won't be nam'd; it shan't be mention'd, not even whisper'd in your prayers at church. 'Sdeath, sir, d'ye smile?

‘ 1 *Gen.* Not I, upon my word.

‘ *Dur.*

'Dur. Why then, look grave as an owl in a barn, or
' a friar with his crown a shaving.

‘ *Mir.* [*Afide to the Gent.*] Don’t be bully’d out of your
‘ humour, gentlemen; the fellow’s mad, laugh at him,
‘ and I’ll stand by you.

' I Gen. I gad and fo we will.

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

' *Dur.* Very pretty. [*Draws.*] She threaten'd to kick
' me. Ay, then, you dogs, I'll murder ye. [*Fights, and*
beats them off, Mir. runs over to his side.]

‘ *Mir.* Ha, ha, ha ! bravely done, *Duretete*, there you
‘ had him, noble captain ; hey, they run, they run, *Vic-*
‘ *toria, Victoria*—Ha, ha, ha—how happy am I in an
‘ excellent friend ! tell me of your virtuoso’s and men of
‘ sense, a parcel of four-fac’d splenetic rogues—a man
‘ of my thin constitution should never want a fool in his
‘ company : I don’t affect your fine things that improve
‘ the understanding, but hearty laughing to fatten my
‘ carcase : and in my conscience, a man of sense is as
‘ melancholy without a coxcomb, as a lion without a
‘ jackall ; he hunts for our diversion, starts game for our
‘ spleen and perfectly feeds us with pleasure.

' I hate the man who makes acquaintance nice,
 ' And still discreetly plagues me with advice ;
 ' Who moves by caution, and mature delays,
 ' And must give reasons for whate'er he says.
 ' The man, indeed, whose converse is so full,
 ' Makes me attentive, but it makes me dull :
 ' Give me the careless rogue, who never thinks,
 ' That plays the fool as freely as he drinks.
 ' Not a buffoon, who is buffoon by trade,
 ' But one that nature, not his wants have made.
 ' Who still is merry, but does ne'er design it ;
 ' And still is ridicul'd, but ne'er can find it.
 ' Who when he's most in earnest, is the best ;
 ' And his most grave expression is a jest. [Exit.]

ACT.

A C T IV.

S C E N E, *Old Mirabel's House.**Enter Old Mirabel and Dugard.*

Dug. **T**HE Lady Abbess is my relation, and privy to the plot. 'Your son has been there, but 'had no admittance beyond the privilege of the grate, 'and there my sister refus'd to see him. He went off 'more nettled at his repulse, than I thought his gaiety 'could admit.'

Old Mir. Ay, ay, this nunnery will bring him about, I warrant ye.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. Here, where are you all!—O! *Mr. Mirabel*, you have done fine things for your posterity—And you, *Mr. Dugard*, may come to answer this—I come to demand my friend at your hands; restore him, sir, or—[*To Old Mir.*

Old Mir. Restore him! What d'ye think I have got him in my trunk or in my pocket!

Dur. Sir, he's mad, and you're the cause on't.

Old Mir. That may be; for I was as mad as he when I begot him.

Dug. Mad, sir, what d'ye mean?

Dur. What do you mean, sir, by shutting up your sister to talk like a parrot thro' a cage? Or a decoy-duck, to draw others into a snare? Your son, sir, because she has deserted him, he has forsaken the world! and in three words, has——

Old Mir. Hang'd himself!

Dur. The very same, turn'd friar.

Old Mir. You lie, sir, 'tis ten times worse. *Bob* turn'd friar! Why should the fellow shave his foolish crown when the same razor may cut his throat?

Dur. If you have any command, or you any interest over him, lose not a minute: He has thrown himself into the next monastery, and has order'd me to pay off his servants, and discharge his equipage.

Old Mir. Let me alone to ferret him out; I'll sacrifice the Abbot, if he receives him; I'll try whether the spiritual

spiritual or the natural father has the most right to the child.—But, dear captain, what has he done with his estate?

Dur. Settled it upon the church, fir.

Old Mir. The church! nay, then the devil won't get him out of their clutches—Ten thousand livres a year upon the church! 'tis downright sacrilege—Come, gentlemen, all hands to work; for half that sum, one of these monasteries shall protect you a traitor from the law, a rebellious wife from her husband, and a disobedient son from his own father. [Exit.

Dug. But will ye persuade me that he's gone to a monastery?

Dur. Is your sister gone to the *Filles Repenties*? I tell you, fir, she's not fit for the society of repenting maids.

Dug. Why so, fir?

Dur. Because she's neither one nor t'other; she's too old to be a maid, and too young to repent.

[Exit Dug. after him.

SCENE, the Inside of a Monastery; Oriana in a Nun's habit; Bifarre.

Ori. I hope, *Bifarre*, there is no harm in jesting with this religious habit.

Bif. To me, the greatest jest in the habit, is taking it in earnest: I don't understand this imprisoning people with the keys of *Paradise*, nor the merit of that virtue which comes by constraint.—Besides, we may own to one another, that we are in the worst company when among ourselves; for our private thoughts run us into those desires, which our pride resists from the attack of the world; and, you may remember, the first woman met the devil when she retir'd from her man.

Ori. But I'm reconcil'd, methinks to the mortification of a nunnery; because I fancy the habit becomes me.

Bif. A well-contriv'd mortification, truly, that makes a woman look ten times handsomer than she did before!
'—Ay, my dear, were there any religion in becoming
'dress, our sex's devotion were rightly plac'd; for our
'toilets would do the work of the altar; we shou'd all
'be canoniz'd.

Ori.

THE WAY TO WIN HIM. 41

' Ori. But don't you think there is a great deal of merit in dedicating a beautiful face and person to the service of religion?

' Bif. Not half so much as devoting 'em to a pretty fellow: if our feminality had no business in this world, why was it sent hither? Let us dedicate our beautiful minds to the service of Heaven. And for our handsome persons, they become a box at the play, as well as a pew in the church.

' Ori. But the vicissitude of fortune, the inconstancy of man, with other disappointments of life, require some place of religion, for a refuge from their persecution.

' Bif. Ha, ha, ha! and do you think there is any devotion in a fellow's going to church, when he takes it only for a sanctuary? Don't you know that religion consists in charity with all mankind, and that you should never think of being friends with Heaven, till you have quarrelled with all the world? Come, come, mind your business, *Mirabel* loves you, 'tis now plain, and hold him to't; give fresh orders that he shan't see you: we get more by hiding our faces sometimes, than by exposing them; a very mask, you see, whets desire; but a pair of keen eyes thro' an iron grate fire double upon 'em, with view and disguise. But I must be gone upon my affairs, I have brought my captain about again.

' Ori. But why will you trouble yourself with that coxcomb?

' Bif. Because he is a coxcomb; had I not better have a lover like him, that I can make an ass of, than a lover like yours, to make a fool of me. [*Knocking below.*] A message from *Mirabel*, I'll lay my life. [*She runs to the door.*] Come hither, run, thou charming nun come hither.

' Ori. What's the news? [*Runs to her.*]

' Bif. Don't you see who's below?

' Ori. I see no body but a friar.

' Bif. Ah! thou poor blind *Cupid*! O' my conscience, these hearts of ours spoil our heads instantly! the fellows no sooner turn knaves, than we turn fools. A friar! Don't you see a villainous genteel mein under that cloak of hypocrisy, the loose careless air of a tall rake-helly fellow?

Ori.

Ori. As I live, *Mirabel* turn'd friar! I hope, in Heaven, he's not in earnest.

Bis. In earnest: ha, ha, ha! are you in earnest? Now's your time; this disguise has he certainly taken for a passport, to get in and try your resolutions; stick to your habit, to be sure; treat him with disdain, rather than anger; for pride becomes us more than passion: remember what I say, if you wou'd yield to advantage, and hold out the attack; to draw him on, keep him off to be sure.

*The cunning gamesters never gain too fast,
But lose at first, to win the more at last.* [Exit.

Ori. His coming puts me into some ambiguity. I don't know how; I don't fear him, but I mistrust myself; wou'd he were not come, yet I wou'd not have him gone neither; I am afraid to talk with him, but I love to see him tho'.

*What a strange power has this fantastic fire,
That makes us dread even what we most desire!*

Enter Mirabel in a Friar's habit.

Mir. Save you, sister—Your brother, young lady, having a regard for your soul's health, has sent me to prepare you for the sacred habit by confession.

Ori. That's false, the cloven foot already. [*Aside.*] My brother's care I own; and to you, sacred sir, I confess, that the great crying sin which I have long indulg'd, and now prepare to expiate, was love. 'My morning thoughts, my evening prayers, my daily musings, nightly cares, was love! my present peace, my future bliss, the joy of earth, and hopes of Heaven! I all condemn'd for love!'

Mir. She's downright stark mad in earnest; death and confusion, I have lost her! [*Aside.*] You confess your fault, madam, in such moving terms, that I could almost be in love with the sin.

Ori. Take care, sir; crimes, like virtues, are their own rewards; my chief delight became my only grief; he in whose breast I thought my heart secure, turn'd robber, and despoil'd the treasure that he kept.

Mir. Perhaps that treasure he esteems so much, that like the miser, tho' afraid to use it, he reserves it safe.

Ori.

Ori. No, holy father : who can be miser in another's wealth, that's prodigal of his own ? His heart was open, shar'd to all he knew, and what, alas ! must then become of mine ! But the same eyes that drew this passion in, shall send it out in tears, to which now hear my vow.—

Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] No, my fair angel, but let me repent ; here on my knees behold the criminal, that vows repentance his. Ha ! no concern upon her !

Ori. This turn is odd, and the time has been, that such a sudden change wou'd have surpris'd me into some confusion.

Mir. Restore that happy time, for I am now re- turn'd to myself, for I want but pardon to deserve your favour, and here I'll fix till you relent and give it.

Ori. Groveling, sordid man ; why would you act a thing to make you kneel, monarch in your pleasures to be slave to your faults ? Are all the conquests of your wand'ring sway, your wit, your humour, fortune, all reduc'd to the base cringing of a bended knee ? Servile and poor ! Pray Heav'n this change be real. [*Aside.*

Mir. I come not here to justify my fault but my submission, for tho' there be a meanness in this humble posture, 'tis nobler still to bend when justice calls, than to resist conviction.

Ori. No more—thy oft repeated violated words reproach my weak belief, 'tis the severest calumny to hear thee speak ; that humble posture which once cou'd raise, now mortifies my pride ; how can'st thou hope for pardon from one that you affront by asking it ?

Mir. [*Rises.*] In my own cause I'll plead no more, but give me leave to intercede for you against the hard injunctions of that habit, which for my fault you wear.

Ori. Surprising insolence ! My greatest foe, pretends to give me counsel ; but I am too warm upon so cool a subject. My resolutions, sir, are fix'd ! but as our hearts were united with the ceremony of our eyes, so I shall spare some tears to the separation. [*Weeps.*] That's all ; farewell.

Mir. And must I lose her ? No. [*Runs and catches her.*] Since all my prayers are vain, I'll use the nobler argument of man, and force you to the justice you refuse ; you're mine by pre-contract : and where's the vow so sacred

44 THE INCONSTANT; OR,

'sacred to disannul another? I'll urge my love, your
'oath, and plead my cause 'gainst all monastic shifts
'upon the earth.

'Ori. Unhand me, ravisher! Wou'd you prophane
'these holy walls with violence? Revenge for all my past
'disgrace now offers, thy life shou'd answer this; wou'd
'I provoke the law: urge me no farther, but be gone.

'Mir. Inexorable woman, let me kneel again. [*Kneels.*]

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where, where's this counterfeit nun?

Ori. Madness! confusion! I'm ruin'd!

Mir. What do I hear? [*Puts on his hood.*] What did
you say, sir!

Old Mir. I say she's a counterfeit, and you may be
another for ought I know, sir; I have lost my child by
these tricks, sir.

Mir. What tricks, sir?

Old Mir. By a pretended trick, sir. A contrivance
to bring my son to reason, and it has made him stark
mad; I have lost him and a thousand pound a year.

Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] My dear father, I'm your
most humble servant.

Old Mir. My dear boy, [*Runs and kisses him.*] 'Welcome
'*ex inferis*, my dear boy,' 'tis all a trick, she's no more
a nun than I am.

Mir. No!

Old Mir. The devil a bit.

Mir. Then kiss me again, my dear dad, for the most
happy news—And now most venerable holy sister. [*Kneels.*]

*Your mercy and your pardon I implore,
For the offence of asking it before.*

Look'e, my dear counterfeiting nun, take my advice,
be a nun in good earnest; women make the best nuns
always when they can't do otherwise. 'Ah my dear fa-
'ther, there is a merit in your son's behaviour that you
'little think; the free deportment of such fellows as I,
'makes more ladies religious, than all the pulpits in
'France.'

Ori. O! Sir, how unhappily have you destroy'd what
was so near perfection! He is the counterfeit that has
deceiv'd you.

Old

Old Mir. Ha! Look'e, fir, I recant, she is a nun.

Mir. Sir, your humble servant, then I'm a friar this moment.

Old Mir. Was ever an old fool so banter'd by a brace o' young ones; hang you both, you're both counterfeits, and my plot's spoil'd, that's all. *[Exit.]*

Ori. Shame and confusion, love, anger, and disappointment, will work my brain to madness.

[Takes off her habit. Exit.]

Mir. Ay, ay, throw by the rags, they have serv'd a turn for us both, and they shall e'en go off together.

[Takes off his habit.]

' Thus the sick wretch, when tortur'd by his pain,

' And finding all essays for life are vain;

' When the physician can no more design,

' Then call the other doctor, the divine.

' What vows to Heaven, wou'd Heaven restore his health?

' Vows all to Heaven, his thoughts, his actions, wealth:

' But if restor'd to vigour as before,

' His health refuses what his sickness swore.

' The body is no sover rais'd and well,

' But the weak soul relapses into ill;

' To all its former swing of life is led,

' And leaves its vows and promises in bed.'

[Exit, throwing away the habit.]

SCENE changes to *Old Mirabel's house*: *Duretete with a letter.*

Dur. *[Reads.]*

MY rudeness was only a proof of your humour, which I have found so agreeable, that I own myself penitent, and willing to make any reparation upon your first appearance to

BISARRE.

Mirabel swears she loves me, and this confirms it; then farewell gallantry, and welcome revenge; 'tis my turn now to be upon the sublime, I'll take her off, I warrant her.

Enter Bisarre.

Well, mistress, do you love me?

Bis. I hope, fir, you will pardon the modesty of—

Dur. Of what? of a dancing devil!—Do you love me, I say?

Bis.

Bis. Perhaps I—

Dur. What?

Bis. Perhaps I do not.

Dur. Ha! abus'd again! Death, woman, I'll—

Bis. Hold, hold, fir, I do, I do!

Dur. Confirm it then by your obedience, stand there; and ogle me now, as if your heart, blood and soul were like to fly out at your eyes—First, the direct surprise [*She looks full upon him.*] Right; next the *Deux yeux par oblique*. [*She gives him the side glance,*] Right; now depart, and languish. [*She turns from him and looks over her shoulder.* Very well; now sigh. [*She sighs.*] Now drop your fan on purpose. [*She drops her fan.*] Now take it up again: Come now, confess your faults; are not you a proud—say after me.

Bis. Proud.

Dur. Impertinent.

Bis. Impertinent.

Dur. Ridiculous.

Bis. Ridiculous.

Dur. Flirt.

Bis. Puppy.

Dur. Zoons! Woman, don't provoke me, we are alone, and you don't know but the devil may tempt me to do you a mischief; ask my pardon immediately.

Bis. I do, fir, I only mistook the word.

Dur. Cry then, have you got e'er a handkerchief?

Bis. Yes, fir.

Dur. Cry then, handsomely; cry like a queen in a tragedy. [*She pretending to cry, bursts out a laughing, and enter two ladies laughing.*

Bis. Ha, ha, ha!

Ladies both. Ha, ha, ha!

Dur. Hell broke loose upon me, and all the furies flutter'd about my ears! Betray'd again?

Bis. That you are upon my word, my dear captain; ha, ha, ha!

Dur. The Lord deliver me.

1 *Lady.* What! Is this the mighty man with the bull-face that comes to frighten ladies? I long to see him angry; come begin.

Dur. Ah, madam, I'm the best natur'd fellow in the world.

2 *Lady.*

2 Lady. A man! we're mistaken, a man has manners; the awkward creature is some tinker's trull in a periwig.

Bis. Come, ladies, let's examine him.

[*They lay hold on him.*]

Dur. Examine! the devil you will!

Bis. I'll lay my life, some great dairy maid in man's clothes.

Dur. They will do't;—look'e, dear christian women, pray hear me.

Bis. Will you ever attempt a lady's honour again?

Dur. If you please to let me get away with my honour, I'll do any thing in the world.

Bis. Will you persuade your friend to marry mine?

Dur. O yes, to be sure.

Bis. And will you do the same by me?

Dur. Burn me if I do, if the coast be clear. [*Runs out.*]

Bis. Ha, ha, ha! the visit, ladies, was critical for our diversions, we'll go make an end of our tea. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mirabel and Old Mirabel.

Mir. Your patience, sir, I tell you I won't marry; and tho' you send all the bishops in *France* to persuade me, I shall never believe their doctrine against their practice.

Old Mir. But will you disobey your father, sir?

Mir. Wou'd my father have his youthful son lie lazing here, bound to a wife, chain'd like a monkey to make sport to a woman, subject to her whims, humours, longings, vapours, and caprices, 'to have her one day 'pleas'd, to-morrow peevish, the next day mad, the 'fourth rebellious; and nothing but this succession of 'impertinence for ages together.' Be merciful, sir, to your own flesh and blood.

Old Mir. But, sir, did not I bear all this, why should not you?

Mir. Then thou think that marriage, like treason, shall attain't the whole body; pray consider, sir, is it reasonable because you throw yourself down from one story, that I must cast myself headlong from the garret window? You wou'd compel me to that state, which I have heard you curse yourself, when my mother and you have battled it for a whole week together.

Old Mir. Never but once, you rogue, and that was when she long'd for six *Flanders* mares: ay, sir, then she

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she was breeding of you, which shew'd what an expensive dog I should have of you.

Enter Petit.

Well, *Petit*, how does she now?

Pet. Mad, sir, *con pampas*—Ay, Mr. *Mirabel*, you'll believe that I speak truth, now when I confess that I have told you hitherto nothing but lies; our jesting is come to a sad earnest, she's downright distracted.

Enter Bizarre.

Bis. Where is this mighty victor!—The great exploit is done; go triumph in the glory of your conquest, inhuman, barbarous man! O Sir, [*To the old gentleman*] your wretched ward has found a tender guardian of you, where her young innocence expected protection, here has she found her ruin.

Old. Mir. Ay the fault is mine, for I believe that rogue won't marry, for fear of begetting such another disobedient son as his father did. I have done all I can, madam, and now can do no more than run mad for company. [*Cries.*]

Enter Dugard with his sword drawn.

Dug. Away! Revenge, revenge.

Old Mir. Patience, patience, sir. [*Old Mir. holds him.*
Bob, draw. [*Aside.*]

Dug. Patience! The coward's virtue, and the brave man's failing, when thus provok'd—Villain!

Mir. Your sister's frenzy shall excuse your madness; and to shew my concern for what she suffers, I'll bear the villain from her brother—Put up your anger with your sword; I have a heart like your's, that swells at an affront receiv'd, but melts at an injury given; and if the lovely *Oriana's* grief be such a moving scene, 'twill find a part within this breast, perhaps as tender as a brother's.

Dug. To prove that soft compassion for her grief, endeavour to remove it.—There, there, behold an object that's infective; I cannot view her, but I am as mad as she: [*Enter Oriana, held by two maids who put her in a chair.*]

chair.] A sister that my dying parents left, with their last words and blessing to my care. Sister, dearest sister.

[Goes to her.

Old Mir. Ay, poor child, poor child, d'ye know me?

Ori. You! you are *Amadis de Gaul*, sir;—Oh! oh my heart! Were you never in love, fair lady? And do you never dream of flowers and gardens?—I dream of walking fires, and tall gigantic fights. Take heed, it comes now—What's that? Pray stand away: I have seen that face sure.—How light my head is!

Mir. What piercing charms has beauty, ev'n in madness! 'these sudden starts of undigested words shoot thro' my soul, with more persuasive force than all the studied art of labour'd eloquence.'—Come, madam, try to repose a little.

Ori. I cannot; for I must be up to go to church, and I must dress me, put on my new gown, and be so fine, to meet my love. Hey ho!—Will not you tell me where my heart lies buried?

Mir. My very soul is touch'd—Your hand, my fair.

Ori. How soft and gentle you feel? I'll tell you your fortune, friend.

Mir. How she stares upon me!

Ori. You have a flattering face; but 'tis a fine one—I warrant you have five hundred mistresses—Ay, to be sure, a mistress for every guinea in his pocket—Will you pray for me? I shall die to-morrow—And will you ring my passing-bell?

Mir. O woman, woman, of artifice created! whose nature, even distracted, has a cunning: In vain let man his sense, his learning boast, when woman's madness over rules his reason. Do you know me injur'd creature?

Ori. No—but you shall be my intimate acquaintance—in the grave.

[Weeps.

Mir. O tears, I must believe you; sure there's a kind of sympathy in madness: for even I, obdurate as I am, do feel my soul so toss'd with storms of passion, that I could cry for help as well as she.—

[Wipes his eyes.

Ori. What have you lost your lover? No, you mock me; I'll go home and pray.

C

Mir.

Mir. Stay, my fair innocence, and hear me own my love so loud, that I may call your senses to their place, restore 'em to their charming happy functions, and re-instate myself into your favour.

Bis. Let her alone, sir, 'tis all too late; she trembles, hold her, her fits grow stronger by her talking; don't trouble her, she don't know you, sir.

Old Mir. Not know him! what then? she loves to see him for all that.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. Where are you all? What the devil! melancholy, and I here! Are ye sad, and such a ridiculous subject, such a very good jest among you as I am?

Mir. Away with this impertinence; this is no place for bagatel: I have murder'd my honour, destroy'd a lady, and my desire of reparation is come at length too late: see there.

Dur. What ails her?

Mir. Alas! she's mad.

Dur. Mad! do'st wonder at that? By this light, they're all so; they're cozening mad; they're brawling mad; they're proud mad; I just now came from a whole world of mad women, that had almost—What is she dead?

Mir. Dead! Heav'ns forbid.

Dur. Heav'ns further it; for till they be as cold as a key, there's no trusting them; you're never sure that a woman's in earnest, 'till she is nail'd in her coffin. Shall I talk to her? Are you mad, mistress?

Bis. What's that to you, sir?

Dur. Oons, madam, are you there! [Runs off]

Mir. Away, thou wild buffoon; how poor and mean this humour now appears? 'His follies and my own I here disclaim;' this lady's frenzy has restor'd my senses, and was she perfect now, as once she was (before ye all I speak it) she should be mine; and as she is, my tears and prayers shall wed her.

Dug. How happy had this declaration been some hours ago.

Bis. Sir, she beckons to you, and waves us to go off; come, come, let's leave 'em [*Ex. omnes, but Mir. and Ori.*]

Ori. O sir.

Mir.

Mir. Speak, my charming angel, if your dear senses have regain'd their order; speak, fair, and blefs me with the news.

Ori. First, let me blefs the cunning of my sex, that happy counterfeited frenzy that has restor'd to my poor labouring breast the dearest, best belov'd of men.

Mir. Tune all ye spheres, your instruments of joy, and carry round your spacious orbs, the happy sound of *Oriana's* health; her soul, whose harmony was next to yours, is now in tune again; the counterfeiting fair has play'd the fool.

She was so mad to counterfeit for me;

I was so mad to pawn my liberty:

But now we both are well, and both are free.

Ori. How, sir, free!

Mir. As air, my dear bedlamite; what, marry a lunatick! Look ye, my dear, you have counterfeited madness so very well this bout, that you'll be apt to play the fool all your life long—Here, gentlemen.

Ori. Monster! you won't disgrace me.

Mir. O' my faith, but I will; here, come in gentlemen.—A miracle! a miracle! the woman's dispossest'd, the devil's vanish'd.

Enter Old Mirabel and Dugard.

Old Mir. Blefs us, was she possest'd?

Mir. With the worst of demons, sir, a marriage-devil, a horrid devil. *Mr. Dugard*, don't be surpriz'd, I promis'd my endeavours to cure your sister; no mad doctor in Christendom could have done it more effectually. Take her into your charge; and have a care she don't relapse; if she should, employ me not again, for I am no more infallible than others of the faculty; I do cure sometimes.

Ori. Your remedy, most barbarous man, will prove the greatest poison to my health; for tho' my former frenzy was but counterfeit, I now shall run into a real madness.

[*Exit Old Mir. after.*]

Dug. This was a turn beyond my knowledge; I'm so confus'd, I know not how to resent it.

[*Exit.*]

Mir.

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Mir. What a dangerous precipice have I escap'd? Was not I just now upon the brink of destruction?

Enter Duretete.

O my friend, let me run into thy bosom; no lark, escap'd from the devouring pounces of a hawk, quakes with more dismal apprehension.

Dur. The matter, man!

Mir. Marriage, hanging; I was just at the gallows-foot, the running noose about my neck, and the cart wheeling from me.—Oh—I shan't be myself this month again.

Dur. Did not I tell you so? They are all alike, faints or devils: their counterfeiting can't be reputed a deceit, for 'tis the nature of the sex, not their contrivance.

Mir. Ay, ay: there's no living here with security; this house is so full of stratagem and design, that I must abroad again.

Dur. With all my heart, I'll bear thee company, my lad; I'll meet you at the play; and we'll set out for *Italy* to-morrow morning.

Mir. A match; I'll go pay my compliment of leave to my father presently.

Dur. I'm afraid he'll stop you.

Mir. What pretend a command over me after his settlement of a thousand pound a year upon me? No, no, he has pass'd away his authority with the conveyance; the will of a living father is chiefly obeyed for the sake of the dying one.

- What makes the world attend and croud the great?
- Hopes, interest, and dependence, make their state;
- Behold the anti-chamber fill'd with beaux,
- A horse's levee throng'd with courtly crows.
- Tho' grumbling subjects make the crown their sport,
- Hopes of a place will bring the sparks to court.
- Dependence, ev'n a father's sway secures,
- For tho' the son rebels, the heir is yours.' [*Exeunt.*]

A C T V.

SCENE, *the Street before the Play-House.**Mirabel and Duretete as coming from the Play.**Dur.* HOW d'ye like this play?*Mir.* I lik'd the company; the lady, the rich beauty in the front-box had my attention: these impudent poets bring the ladies together to support them, and to kill every body else.*For deaths upon the stage the ladies cry,**But ne'er mind us that in the audience die:**'The poet's hero should not move their pain,**'But they shou'd weep for those their eyes have stain.'**Dur.* Hoyty, toyty; did *Phillis* inspire you with all this?*Mir.* Ten times more; the play-house is the element of poetry, because the region of beauty; the ladies, methinks, have a more triumphant air in the boxes than any where else, they sit commanding on their thrones with all their subject slaves about them: their best clothes, best looks, shining jewels, sparkling eyes, the treasure of the world in a ring. Then there's such a hurry of pleasure to transport us; the bustle, noise, gallantry, 'equipage, garters, feathers, wigs,' bows, smiles, ogles, love, music, and applause: I could wish that my whole life long were the first night of a new play.*Dur.* The fellow has quite forgot this journey; have you bespoke post horses?*Mir.* Grant me but three days, dear captain, one to discover the lady, one to unfold myself, and one to make me happy; and then I'm yours to the world's end.*Dur.* Hast thou the impudence to promise thyself a lady of her figure and quality in so short a time?*Mir.* Yes, sir—I have a confident address, no disagreeable person, and five hundred lewis d'ors in my pocket.*Dur.* Five hundred lewis d'ors! You a'n't mad?

Mir. I tell you, she's worth five thousand; one of her black brilliant eyes is worth a diamond as big as her head. 'I compar'd her necklace with her looks, and the living jewels out-sparkled the dead ones by a million.'

Dur. But you have own'd to me, that abating *Oriana's* pretensions to marriage, you lov'd her passionately; then how can you wander at this rate?

Mir. I long'd for a partridge t'other day off the king's plate, but d'ye think, because I could not have it, I must eat nothing.

Dur. Prithee, *Mirabel*, be quiet; you may remember what narrow 'scapes you have had abroad by following strangers; you forget your leap out of the Courtisan's window at *Bologna*, to save your fine ring there.

Mir. My ring's a trifle; there's nothing we possess comparable to what we desire——be shy of a lady bare-fac'd in the front-box with a thousand pounds in jewels about her neck! For shame, no more.

Enter Oriana in Boy's Clothes with a Letter.

Ori. Is your name, *Mirabel*, sir?

Mir. Yes, sir.

Ori. A letter from your uncle in *Picardy*.

[*Gives the letter.*

Mir. [*Reads.*] **T**HE bearer is the son of a Protestant gentleman, who flying for his religion, left me the charge of this youth, [*a pretty boy.*] He's fond of some handsome service that may afford him opportunity of improvement; your care of him will oblige
Your's.

Has't a mind to travel child?

Ori. 'Tis my desire, sir; I should be pleas'd to serve a traveller in any capacity.

Mir. A hopeful inclination; you shall along with me into *Italy*, as my page.

Dur. 'I don't think it safe, the rogue's [*Noise without.*] too handsome.'——The play's done, and some of the ladies come this way.

Enter Lamorce, with her train born up by a Page.

Mir. *Duretete*, the very dear, identical she.

Dur. And what then?

Mir.

Mir. Why 'tis she.

Dur. And what then, fir?

Mir. Then! Why—Look'e, firrah, the first piece of service I put on you, is to follow that lady's coach, and bring me word where she lives.

Ori. I don't know the town, fir, and am afraid of losing myself.

Mir. Pshaw.

Lam. Page, what's become of all my people?

Page. I can't tell, madam, I can see no sign of your ladyship's coach.

Lam. That fellow is got into his old pranks, and fall'n drunk somewhere; none of the footmen there?

Page. Not one, madam.

Lam. These servants are the plague of our lives, what shall I do?

Mir. By all my hopes, fortune pimps for me; now *Duretete* for a piece of gallantry.

Dur. Why you won't sure?

Mir. Won't, brute! Let not your servants neglect, madam, put your ladyship to any inconvenience, for you can't be disappointed of an equipage whilst mine waits below; and wou'd you honour, the master so far, he would be proud to pay his attendance.

Dur. Ay to be sure.

Lam. Sir, I won't presume to be troublesome, for my habitation is a great way off.

Dur. Very true, madam, and he's a little engag'd, besides, madam, a hackey-coach will do as well, madam.

Mir. Rude beast, be quiet! [*To Duretete.*] The farther from home, madam, the more occasion you have for a guard—pray, madam—

Lam. Lard, fir.—[*He seems to press, she to decline it in dumb shew.*]

Dur. Ah! the devil's in his impudence; now he wheedles, she smiles; he flatters, she simpers; he swears, she believes; he's a rogue, and she's a w—in a moment.

Mir. Without there! my coach; *Duretete*, with me joy.

Dur. Wish you a surgeon! Here you little *Picard*, go follow your master, and he'll lead you—

Ori. Whither, sir?

Dur. To the academy, child: 'tis the fashion, with men of quality, to teach their pages their exercises—go.

Ori. Won't you go with him too, sir; that woman may do him some harm, I don't like her.

Dur. Why, how now Mr. *Page*, do you start up to give laws of a sudden; do you pretend to rise at court, and disapprove the pleasure of your betters: Look'e, firrah, if ever you wou'd rise by a great man, be sure to be with him in his little actions, and, as a step to your advancement, follow your master immediately, and make it your hope that he goes to a bawdy-house.

Ori. Heav'ns forbid.

[*Exit.*

Dug. Now wou'd I sooner take a cart in company o the hangman, than a coach with that woman: what strange antipathy have I taken against these creatures—a woman to me is aversion upon aversion, a cheese, a cat, a breast of mutton, the squalling of children, the grinding of knives, and the snuff of a candle. [*Exit.*

SCENE, a handsome apartment.

Enter Mirabel and Lamorce.

Lam. To convince me, sir, that your service was something more than good breeding, please to lay out an hour of your company upon my desire, as you have already upon my necessity.

Mir. Your desire, madam, has only prevented my request: my hours! make 'em yours, madam, eleven twelve, one, two, three, and all that belong to those happy minutes.

Lam. But I must trouble you, sir, to dismiss your retinue, because an equipage at my door, at this time of night, will not be consistent with my reputation.

Mir. By all means, madam, all but one little boy—Here, *Page*, [*Enter Oriana*] order my coach and servants home, and do you stay; 'tis a foolish country boy, that knows nothing but innocence. [*Exit Oriana.*

Lam. Innocence, sir? I should be sorry if you made any sinister constructions of my freedom.

Mir. O madam, I must not pretend to remark upon any body's freedom, having so entirely forfeited my own.

Lam.

Lam. Well, fir, 'twere convenient towards our easy correspondence, that we enter'd into a free confidence of each other, by a mutual declaration of what we are, and what we think of one another.—Now, fir, what are you?

Mir. In three words, madam,—I am am a gentleman, I have five hundred pounds in my pocket, and a clean shirt on.

Lam. And your name is ———

Mir. Mustapha.—Now, madam, the inventory of your fortunes.

Lam. My name is *Lamorce*; my birth noble; I was married young, to a proud, rude, fullen, impetuous fellow; the husband spoiled the gentlemen; crying ruin'd my face, 'till at last I took heart, leap'd out of a window, got away to my friends, su'd my tyrant, and recovered my fortune—I liv'd from fifteen to twenty to please a husband; from twenty to forty I'm resolv'd to please myself, and from thence upwards I'll humour the world.

Mir. The charming wild notes of a bird broke out of its cage.

Lam. I mark'd you at the play, and something I saw of a well-furnish'd, careless, agreeable tour about you. Methought your eyes made their mannerly demands with such an arch modesty, that I don't know how—but I'm elop'd. Ha, ha, ha! I'm elop'd.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! I rejoice in your good fortune with all my heart.

Lam. O, now I think on't, Mr. *Mustapha*, you have got the finest ring there, I cou'd scarcely believe it right; pray let me see it.

Mir. Hum! Yes, madam, 'tis, 'tis right—but, but, but, but, but, it was given me by my mother, an old family ring, madam, an old-fashion'd family-ring.

Lam. Ay, fir—If you can entertain yourself 'with a song' for a moment, I'll wait on you immediately; 'come in there.

[Exit.]

Enter Singers.

Call what you please, fir.

Mir. The new song.—*Prithee*, *Phillis*,

'S O N G.'

C 4

Mir.

Mir. Certainly the stars have been in a strange intriguing humour when I was born—Ay, this night thou'd I have had a bride in my arms, and that I thou'd like well enough: But what thou'd I have to-morrow night? The same. And what next night? The same. And what next night? The very same: Soup for breakfast, soup for dinner, soup for supper, and soup for breakfast again—But here's variety.

*I love the fair who freely gives her heart,
That's mine by ties of nature, not of art;
Who boldly owns whate'er her thoughts indite,
And is too modest for a hypocrite.*

[*Lamorce appears at the door, as he runs towards her, four Bravoes step in before her. He starts back.*
She comes, she comes—Hum, hum—Bitch—Murder'd, murder'd to be sure? The cursed strumpet! To make me send away my servants—Nobody near me! These cut-throats always make sure work. What shall I do? I have but one way. [Aside] Are these gentlemen your relations, madam?

Lam. Yes, sir.

Mir. Gentlemen your most humble servant; sir, your most faithful, yours, sir, with all my heart; your most obedient—come, gentlemen, [*Salutes all round*] please to sit—no ceremony, next the lady, pray sir.

Lam. Well, sir, and how d'ye like my friends?

[*They all sit.*

Mir. O, madam, the most finish'd gentlemen! I was never more happy in good company in all my life; I suppose, sir, you have travell'd?

Bra. Yes, sir.

Mir. Which way, may I presume?

Bra. In a western barge, sir.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! very pretty; facetious pretty gentleman!

Lam. Ha, ha, ha! sir, you have got the prettiest ring upon you finger there——

Mir. Ah? madam, 'tis at your service with all my heart.

[*Offering the ring.*

Lam.

Lam. By no means, sir, a family ring! [*Takes it.*]

Mir. No matter, madam. Seven hundred pounds by this light. [*Aside.*]

2 Bra. Pray, sir, what's o'clock?

Mir. Hum! Sir, I have left my watch at home.

2 Braw. I thought I saw the string of it just now—

Mir. Ods my life, sir, I beg your pardon, here it is—but it don't go. [*Putting it up.*]

Lam. O dear sir, an *English* watch! *Tompion's* I presume.

Mir. D'ye like it, madam—no ceremony—'tis at your service with all my heart and soul—*Tompion's*! Hang ye. [*Aside.*]

1 Bra. But, sir, above all things, I admire the fashion and make of your sword-hilt.

Mir. I'm mighty glad you like it, sir.

1 Bra. Will you part with it, sir?

Mir. Sir, I won't sell it.

1 Bra. Not sell it, sir!

Mir. No, gentlemen,——but I'll bestow it with all my heart. [*Offering it.*]

1 Bra. O, sir, we shall rob you.

Mir. That you do I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*] I have another at home, pray, sir,—Gentlemen you're too modest, have I any thing else that you fancy—'Sir, will you 'do me a favour?' [*To the 1st Bravo.*] I am extremely in love with that wig which you wear, will you do me the favour to change with me?

1 Bra. Lock'e, sir, this is a family wig, and I wou'd not part with it, but if you like it——

Mir. Sir your most humble servant. [*They change wigs.*]

1 Bra. Madam, your most humble slave.

[*Goes up foppishly to the Lady, salutes her.*]

2 Bra. The fellow's very liberal; shall we murder him?

1 Bra. What! Let him 'scape to hang us all! And I to lose my wig; no, no! I want but a handsome pretence to quarrel with him, for you know we must act like gentlemen. 'Here, some wine'—[*Wine here.*] Sir your good health. [*Pulls Mirabel by the nose.*]

Mir. Oh! sir, your most humble servant; a pleasant frolic enough, to drink a man's health, and pull him—

by the nose : ha, ha, ha, the pleafanteft pretty-humour'd gentleman.

' *Lam.* Help the gentleman to a glafs,' [*Mir drinks.*

1 *Bra.* How d'ye like the wine, fir?

Mir. Very good o' the kind, fir : But I tell ye what ; I find we're all inclin'd to be frolicsome, and I'gad, for my own part, I was never more difpofed to be merry ; let's make a night on't, ha !— This wine is pretty, but I have fuch *Burgundy* at home.—Look'e, gentlemen, let me fend for half a dozen flasks of my *Burgundy*, I defy *France* to match it ;—'Twill make us all life, all air, pray, gentlemen.

2 *Bra.* Eh ! Shall us have his *Burgundy* !

1 *Bra.* Yes, faith, we'll have all we can ; here call up the gentleman's fervant—What think you, *Lamorce* ?

Lam. Yes, yes,——your fervant is a foolifh country boy, fir, he underftands nothing but innocence.

Mir. Ay, ay, madam.—Here, *Page*, [*Enter Oriana.*] take this key, and go to my butler, order him to fend half a dozen flasks of the red *Burgundy*, mark'd a thoufand ; and be fure you make hafte, I long to entertain my friends here, my very good friends.

Omnes. Ah, dear, fir !

1. *Bra.* Here, child, take a glafs of wine—Your mafter and I have chang'd wigs, honey, in a frolic. Where had you this pretty boy, honeft *Mustapha* ?

Ori. *Mustapha* !

Mir. Out of *Picardy*——this is the firft errand he has made for me, and if he does it right, I'll encourage him.

Ori. The red *Burgundy*, fir.

Mir. The red, mark'd a thoufand, and be fure you make hafte.

Ori. I fhall, fir.

[*Exit.*

1 *Bra.* Sir you were pleas'd to like my wig, have you any fancy for my coat ?—Look'e, fir, it has ferv'd a great many honeft gentlemen very faithfully.

Mir. Not fo faithfully, for I'm afraid it has got a fcurvy trick of leaving all it's mafters in neceffity.—The influence of thefe dogs is beyond their cruelty. [*Aside.*

Lam. You're melancholy, fir.

Mir. Only concern'd, madam, that I fhould have no fervant here but this little boy——he'll make fome confounded

founded blunder, I'll lay my life on't, I wou'd not be disappointed of my wine for the universe.

Lam. He'll do well enough, fir; but supper's ready, will you please to eat a bit, fir?

Mir. O, madam, I never had a better stomach in my life.

Lam. Come then,—we have nothing but a plate of soup.

Mir. Ah! the marriage-soup I cou'd dispense with now. [*Aside.*] [*Exit, banding the lady.*]

2 *Bra.* That wig won't fall to your share.

1 *Bra.* No, no, we'll settle that after supper, in the mean time the gentleman shall wear it.

2 *Bra.* Shall we dispatch him?

3 *Bra.* To be sure. I think he knows me.

1 *Bra.* Ay, ay, dead men tell no tales; I wonder at the impudence of the *English* rogues, that will hazard the meeting a man at the bar whom they have encounter'd upon the road! I ha'nt the confidence to look a man in the face after I have done him an injury, therefore we'll murder him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to Old Mirabel's house.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. My friend has forsaken me, I have abandon'd my mistress, my time lies heavy upon my hands, and my money burns in my pocket—But now I think on't, my myrmidons are upon duty to-night; I'll fairly strole down to the guard, and nod away the night with my honest lieutenant over a flask of wine, a rake-helly story, and a pipe of tobacco. [*Going off, Bis. meets him.*]

Bis. Who comes there? stand!

Dur. Hey day, now she's turn'd dragoon.

Bis. Look'e, fir, I'm told you intend to travel again.—I design to wait on you as far as *Italy*.

Dur. Then I'll travel into *Wales*.

Bis. *Wales*! What country's that?

Dur. The land of mountains, child, where you're never out of the way, 'cause there's no such thing as a high road.

Bis. Rather always in a high-road, 'cause you travel all upon hills;—but be't as it will, I'll jog along with you.

Dur. But we intend to sail to the *East-Indies*.

Bis.

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Bis. East or West, 'tis all one to me; I'm tight and light, and the fitter for sailing.

Dur. But suppose we take thro' Germany, and drink hard.

Bis. Suppose I take thro' Germany, and drink harder than you.

Dur. Suppose I go to a bawdy-house.

Bis. Suppose I shew you the way.

Dur. 'Sdeath, woman, will you go to the guard with me, and smoak a pipe?

Bis. Allons donc!

Dur. The devil's in the woman;—suppose I hang myself.

Bis. There I'll leave you.

Dur. And a happy riddance, the gallows is welcome.

Bis. Hold, hold, Sir [*Catches him by the arm going.*] one word before we part.

Dur. Let me go, madam,——or I shall think that you're a man, and perhaps may examine you.

Bis. Stir if you dare; I have still spirits to attend me; and can raise such a muster of fairies as shall punish you to death—Come, sir, stand there now and ogle me: [*He frowns upon her.*] Now a languishing sigh! [*He groans.*] Now run and take my fan,——faster. [*He runs and takes it up.*] Now play with it handsomely.

Dur. Ay, ay. [*He tears it all in pieces.*

Bis. Hold, hold, dear humourous coxcomb; Captain, spare my fan, and I'll—Why, you rude, inhuman monster, don't you expect to pay for this?

Dur. Yes, madam, there's twelve pence; for that is the price on't.

Bis. Sir, it cost a guinea.

Dur. Well, madam, you shall have the sticks again.

[*Throws them to her, and Exit.*

Bis. Ha, ha, ha! ridiculous below my concern. I must follow him however, to know if he can give me any news of Oriana.

[*Exit.*

SCENE changes to Lamorce's Lodgings.

Enter Mirabel solus.

Mir. Bloody hell-hounds, I over-heard you:—Was not I two hours ago the happy, gay, rejoicing *Mirabel?*

bel? How did I plume my hopes in a fair coming prospect of a long scene of years? Life courted me with all the charms of vigour, youth, and fortune; and to be torn away from all my promised joys is more than death; the manner too, by villains.—O my *Oriana*, this very moment might have bless'd me in thy arms, and my poor boy! the innocent boy!—Confusion!—But hush, they come: I must dissemble still—No news of my wine, gentlemen?

Enter the four Bravoes.

1 *Bra.* No, fir, I believe your country-booby has lost himself, and we can wait no longer for't:—True, fir, you're a pleasant gentleman, but I suppose you understand our business.

Mir. Sir, I may go near to guess at your employments; you, fir, are a lawyer, I presume, you a physician, you a scrivener, and you a stock-jobber.—All cut throats, I-gad. [*Aside.*]

4 *Bra.* Sir, I am a broken officer; I was cashier'd at the head of the army for a coward: so I took up the trade of murder to retrieve the reputation of my courage.

3 *Bra.* I am a soldier too, and wou'd serve my king, but I don't like the quarrel, and I have more honour than to fight in a bad cause.

2 *Bra.* I was bred a gentleman, and have no estate, but I must have my whore and my bottle, thro' the prejudice of education.

1 *Bra.* I am a ruffian too, by the prejudice of education, I was bred a butcher. In short, fir, if your wine had come, we might have trifled a little longer.—Come, fir, which sword will you fall by? mine, fir?

2 *Bra.* Or mine? [*draws.*]

3 *Bra.* Or mine? [*draws.*]

4 *Bra.* Or mine? [*draws.*]

Mir. I scorn to beg my life; but to be butcher'd thus! [*knocking*] O there's the wine:—this moment for my life or death.

Enter Oriana.

'Lost, forever lost!'—Where's the wine, child? [*faintly.*]

Ori. Coming up, fir. [*Stamps.*]

Enter

Enter Duretete with his sword drawn, and six of the grand musqueteers with their pieces presented, the Russians drop their swords. [Oriana goes off.]

Mir. The wine, the wine, the wine. Youth, pleasure, fortune, days and years, are now my own again.—Ah, my dear friends, did not I tell you this wine wou'd make me merry?—Dear captain, these gentlemen are the best natur'd, facetious, witty creatures, that ever you knew.

Enter Lamorce.

Lam. Is the wine come, sir?

Mir. O yes, madam, the wine is come—see there? [Pointing to the soldiers.] Your ladyship has got a very fine ring upon your finger.

Lam. Sir, 'tis at your service.

Mir. O ho! is it so? Thou dear seven hundred pound, thou'rt welcome home again, with all my heart—Ad's my life, madam, you have got the finest built watch there! *Tompion's*, I presume.

Lam. Sir, you may wear it.

Mir. O, 'madam, by no means, 'tis too much—Rob you of all!—[Taking it from her] Good dear time, thou'rt a precious thing, I'm glad I have retriev'd thee: [Putting it up] What, my friends neglected all this while! Gentlemen, you'll pardon my complaisance to the lady.—How now—is it civil to be so out of humour at my entertainment, and I so pleas'd with yours? Captain, you're surpris'd at all this! but we're in our frolics, you must know.—Some wine here.

Enter Servant with wine.

Come, Captain, this worthy gentleman's health.

[Tweaks the first Bravo by the nose; he roars.]

But now, where—where's my dear deliverer, my boy, my charming boy!

1 Bra. I hope some of our crew below-stairs have dispatch'd him.

Mir. Villain, what say'st thou? Dispatch'd! I'll have ye all tortured, rack'd, torn to pieces alive; if you have touch'd my boy.—Here, page! page! page! [Runs out.]

Dur. Here, gentlemen, be sure you secure those fellows.

1 Bra. Yes, sir, we know you and your guard will be very civil to us.

Dur.

THE WAY TO WIN HIM. 65

Dur. Now for you, madam;—He, he, he!—I'm so pleas'd to think that I shall be reveng'd of one woman before I die—Well, mistress *Snap Dragon*, which of these honourable gentlemen is so happy to call you wife?

Bra. Sir, she should have been mine to-night, 'cause *Sampre* here had her last night. Sir, she's very true to us all four.

Dur. Take 'em to justice. [*The guards carry off the Brav.*]

Enter Old Mirabel, Dugard, Bifarre.

Old Mir. Robin, Robin, where's *Bob*? where's my boy?—What, is this the lady? a pretty whore, faith.—Hark'e, child, because my son was so civil as to oblige you with a coach, I'll treat with a cart, indeed I will.

Dug. Ay, madam,—and you shall have a swinging equipage, three or four thousand footmen at your heels at least.

Dur. No less becomes her quality.

Bif. Faugh! the monster!

Dur. Monster! ay, you're all a little monstrous, let me tell you.

Enter Mirabel.

Old Mir. Ah, my dear *Bob*, art thou safe, man?

Mir. No, no, sir, I'm ruin'd, the savor of my life is lost.

Old Mir. No, he came and brought us the news.

Mir. But where is he?—[*Enter Oriana.*] Ha! [*Runs and embraces her.*] My dear preserver, what shall I do to recompence your trust?—Father, friends, gentlemen, behold the youth that has reliev'd me from the most ignominious death, 'from the scandalous poniards of these 'bloody ruffians, where to have fall'n would have defam'd 'my memory with vile reproach.—My life, estate, my 'all, is due to such a favour'—Command me, child, before you all, before my late, so kind indulgent stars, I swear to grant whate'er you ask.

Ori. To the same stars indulgent now to me, I will appeal as to the justice of my claim; I shall demand but what was mine before—the just performance of your contract to *Oriana*.

[*Discovering herself.*]

Om. *Oriana!*

Ori. In this disguise I resolv'd to follow you abroad, counterfeited that letter that got me into your service; and so, by this strange turn of fate, I became the instrument

ment of your preservation; 'few common servants wou'd
'have had such cunning; my love inspir'd me with the
'meaning of your message, 'cause the concern for your
'safety made me suspect your company.'

Dur. *Mirabel* you're caught.

Mir. Caught! I scorn the thought of imposition, the
'tricks and artful cunning' of the sex I have despis'd, and
'broke thro' all contrivance. Caught! No, 'tis my vo-
'luntary act: this was no human stratagem, but by my
'providential stars, design'd to shew the dangers wan-
'dering youths incur by the pursuit of an unlawful love,
'to plunge me headlong in the snares of vice, and then
'to free me by the hands of virtue:' here, on my knees,
I humbly beg my fair preserver's pardon; my thanks are
needless, for myself I owe. And now for ever do pro-
test me yours.

Old Mir. Tall, all di dall. (*sings.*) Kifs me, daugh-
ter—no, you shall kifs me first, (*To Lamorce*) for you're
the cause on't. Well, *Bisarre*, what say you to the cap-
tain?

Bis. I like the beast well enough, but I don't under-
stand his paces so well as to venture him in a strange road.

Old Mir. But marriage is so beaten a path that you
can't go wrong.

Bis. Ay, 'tis so beaten that the way is spoil'd.

Dur. There is but one thing shou'd make me thy hus-
band—I cou'd marry thee to-day for the privilege of
beating thee to-morrow.

Bis. And then——

Old Mir. Come, come, you may agree for all this,
Mr. Dugard, are not you pleas'd with this?

Dug. So pleas'd, that if I thought it might secure your
son's affection to my sister, I wou'd double her fortune.

Mir. Fortune! has she not given me mine? my life,
estate, my all, and what is more, her virtuous self.—
Virtue, in this so advantageous light, has her own spark-
ling charms, more tempting far than glittering gold or
glory. Behold the foil (*Pointing to Lamorce*) that sets
this brightness off! (*To Oriana.*) Here view the pride
(*To Oriana.*) and scandal of the sex. (*To Lamorce.*)
There (*To Lam.*) the false meteor, whose deluding light
leads mankind to destruction. Here (*To Oriana*) the
bright

bright shining star that guides to a security of happiness, a garden and a single she (*To Oriana*) was our first father's bliss; the tempter (*To Lam.*) and to wander, was his curse.

*What liberty can be so tempting there, (To Lam.
As a soft, virtuous, am'rous bondage here? (To Ori.
[Exeunt omnes.*

S O N G:

SINGE, Coelia, 'tis not in our power
To tell how long our lives may last,
Begin to love this very hour,
You've lost too much in what is past.

For since the power we all obey,
Has in your breast my heart confin'd,
Let me my body to it lay,
In vain you'd part what nature join'd.

E P I L O G U E.

FROM Fletcher's great original to day
We took the hint of this our modern play;
 Our author, from his lines, has strove to paint
A witty, wild, inconstant, free gallant:
With a gay soul, with sense, and will to rove,
With language, and with softness fram'd to move,
With little truth, but with a world of love.
Such forms on maids in morning slumbers wait,
When fancy first instructs their hearts to beat,
When first they wish, and sigh for what they know not yet.
 Frown not, ye fair, to think your lovers may
 Reach your cold hearts by some unguarded way;
 Let Villeroy's misfortune make you wise,
 There's danger still in darkness and surprise;
 Tho' from his rampart he defy'd the foe,
 Prince Eugene found an aqueduct below.
 With easy freedom and a gay address,
 A pressing lover seldom wants success:
 Whilst the respectful, like the Greek, sits down,
 And wastes a ten years siege before the town.
 For her own sake, let no forsaken maid,
 Our wanderer, for want of love, upbraid;
 Since 'tis a secret, none shou'd e'er confess,
 That they have lost the happy pow'r to please.
 If you suspect the rogue inclin'd to break,
 Break first, and swear you've turn'd him off a week
 As princes, when they resty statesmen doubt,
 Before they can surrender, turn 'em out.
 Whate'er you think, grave uses may be made,
 And much even for inconstancy be said.
 Let the good man for marriage-rites design'd,
 With studious care, and diligence of mind,
 Turn over every page of womankind;
 Mark every sense, and how the readings vary,
 And, when he knows the worst on't,—let him marry.

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